First Edition, 1970

Price Eight Rupees

MEWAR
THROUGH THE AGES

Editor

D. L. Paliwal
M.A., Ph.D.



Sahitya Sansthan
RAJASTHAN VIDYAPEETH UDAIPUR
RAJASTHAN—INDIA

Printed by
Swadeshi Printers
Udaipur (Raj.)

Contents



Contributors

D V N Misra
Department of Archaeology Deccan College Poona

R C. Agrawal
Director Archaeology and Museum Rajasthan

Dr G N Sharma
Professor Department of History
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur

J S Singhvi
Chairman Finance Corporation Rajasthan

Dr D L Paliwal
Director Sahitya Sansthan Rajasthan
Vidyapeeth Udaipur

Dr K S Gupta
Department of History University of Udaipur

Dr R S Darda
Department of Political Science University of Udaipur

Parmanand Choyal
Department of Drawing and Painting
University of Udaipur

C. G Goswami
Revenue Officer Municipal Council Udaipur

R. V Somani
Department of Archaeology and Museum Rajasthan, Jaipur

Dr B M Javalia
Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute Udaipur

Dr Chandra Shekhar Shastri
Research Scholar Udaipur

Dev Kothari
Research Officer Sahitya Sansthan R V Udaipur

S C. Menaria
Research Scholar University of Udaipur

Preface

The ancient land comprising the territory of the erstwhile Mewar State has always attracted the attention of the scholars and historians Diverse social and cultural phenomenon visible in this land lead one to trace its origin in the most ancient times of human history The pre historic stone tools found at various places of Mewar particularly on the banks of the rivers Gambhiri Wagan, Kadmali Berach and Banas show that the man had occupied this land at least a hundred thousand years back. The archaeological explorations at Bagor and Ahar have proved that the most ancient cultures of mankind have flourished in this part of the country

Thus the land of Mewar once a part of Sivi Janpad (republic) and known as Medpata has been uninterruptedly a base for human occupation and flourishing of human civilization from the earliest times Undoubtedly the geographical factors played a decisive part in the immigration of man to this land and live create and flourish there Almost all the social and cultural revolutions which took place in northern India enveloped it. Madhyamika (Nagari) Aghatpur (Ahar) Nagadrah (Nagda) and Chitrakut (Chitor) have been the centres of ancient cultures and their ruins and still standing monuments speak of their erstwhile glory Archaeological and literary researches have proved that these places had been major centres of learning of contemporary times and the great masters of literature, art and architecture lived and worked there. Chitor (Chitrakut) particularly has been an immensely fascinating place for the scholars not withstanding the ravages committed by the time *during the span of hundreds of years.* Several temples palaces and other monuments still stand there to tell the story of successive religious, cultural and political revolutions that took place in the history of the country

The inhabitation of primitive man in this land the successive immigrations to this part of various tribes from time immemorial and social, cultural and political revolutions that took place during the long course of history all have gone to make diversity of this land racially socially religiously and culturally Inspite of this diversity

the unique sense of oneness in the people has been noteworthy. This sense of oneness and unity of purpose have had their undelible impact on the medieval history The undaunting and chivalrous people of Mewar led by the heroic ruling classes of this land have produced unsurpassable examples of dauntless valiance and sacrifice that are rare in the entire human history Since the middle of the eighteenth century the institution of feudalistic monarchy began degenerating and the small and big kingdoms of India began crumbling, the conditions in Mewar were no exception and the heroic land is at once found smarting and chafing under the yoke of the British Imperialism.

The present work has been an attempt to present a very brief history of social cultural and political institutions of Mewarth at developed during the course of several hundred years. As the readers would find the attempt have been only partly successful The editor is highly indebted to the scholars who have very kindly contributed their learned articles for this publication

D L. Paliwal

pre-and proto-historic mewar

The glorious role which Mewar has played during the more recent period of Indian history is well known to every Indian. Much less is known about the earlier history of Mewar especially before the period when written documents whether as inscriptions or coins first began to appear But any student who knows something of the diversity of communities and cultural patterns existing in Mewar today will agree that written records alone cannot explain this cultural mosaic. Its origins, at least in part have to be sought in the pre-historic period which is being brought to light by the patient work of archaeologists.

From the point of view of human history Mewar is one of the oldest regions of India. It has been occupied by man at least for a hundred thousand years if not more And during this period a number of cultures have flourished in this region. Some of them became totally extinct and are now represented only in the archaeological record. Others—the relatively recent—left traces which still survive in some of the communities of Mewar

Though all history before the appearance of written records is strictly speaking pre-history in India and some other countries a twilight period called proto history is recognized between pre-history and history Theoretically proto history is that period when pre-history of an area begins to be enlightened—largely indirectly—by written sources in the same or neighbouring territories yet in practice in India the term has come to be applied to all those cultures whose economy was

based on food production (agriculture and stock raising) and which flourished before the appearance of historical times proper Pre history is therefore left to mean the stone ages when man lived by hunting and foodgathering

The pre-history and proto history of Mewar known to us may be divided into following cultural periods counting from the top

1 The Lower Palaeolithic (or Early Stone Age)
2 The Middle Palaeolithic (or Middle Stone Age)
3 The Mesolithic (or Late Stone Age)
4 The Chalcolithic.
5. The Iron Age.

The Early Stone Age

By their very nature the pre historic peoples are anonymous because no records exist to tell us by what name they called themselves or were known to their contemporaries. Pre historic peoples are often known by the place where their archaeological and physical remains were first found or by the nature of these relics themselves. The earliest peoples of Mewar can be called the Acheulian people—the name by which the people of comparable stage of culture are known all over the old world. This name is derived from the French locality of St. Acheul where tools similar to those found in Mewar were first recognized more than a hundred years ago

These Acheulian people were essentially hunters and food—gatherers. Their only surviving relics are the stone tools made and used and discarded by them No doubt man must have always made tools of wood and other organic materials but these survive long periods under only the most exceptional circumstances. (Incidentally the term *tool* here is used to mean all objects made by man) These tools are known as choppers chopping tools scrapers, flakes, handaxes and cleavers. They were made by chipping one or both faces of pebbles of quartzite quartz or sandstone picked up from the river beds and were used for a variety of purposes. such as skinning and butchering dead animals digging roots and tubers from the earth and working wood Their hunting was probably done by wooden spears and by stalking game Though we have no remains of animals which these early Mewarian killed and ate we can have some idea of their food and the wild life around them from the contemporary conditions in the Narmada and Godavari valleys where fossils of animals of this period have been found. These animals include now extinct species of cattle, elephant hippopotamus, deer and pig These early people in Mewar as else where certainly had a great predilection for meat.

Their stone tools are found in thick bouldery deposits at the bottom of the cliffs along river banks. Climate at this period is likely to have been wetter so that rivers could carry thick loads of coarse sediment from the hills over long stretches. These Lower Palaeolithic tools occur most abundantly in the rivers Gambhiri, Wagan Kadmali and the Berach and their tributaries in the vicinity of and around Chitorgarh. The hill at Chitorgarh now crowned by the famous fort must have sheltered some of the earliest stone age communities. For it was from the slopes of this hill that stone tools were washed down and incorporated in the sediments of the Gambhiri East ward this early culture is known from the deposits of the river Chambal and its tributaries in Kota and Jhalawar districts, and north ward from the Banas river at many places. But the earliest settlers of Mewar seem to have avoided the foot hills of the Aravallis for our search for this culture in the river Beroch in Udaipur district yielded only a few tools, near the villages of Daravli and Kheri and one near Debok, and none west of the last mentioned place. In the Banas also only two or three tools are known from near Nathdwara and have been found between this place and Hamirgarh near Bhilwara. Our search in the Chandrabhaga from Amet to Potta was also fruitless. This culture is likely to have flourished about a hundred thousand years ago

The Middle Stone Age

The early stone age culure was replaced probably forty or fifty thousand years ago by another culture The tools of this culture are also made of stone but they are of different types and smaller and thinner These tools are made of small flakes removed from bigger stones, known in archaeological terminology as cores. Many of these flakes were elaborately prepared by technique known as Levallois after a site near Paris in France Such tools are known as scrapers and points. The latter of them were probably hafted on wooden shafts to make spears while scrapers were used for skinning game and working wood. These tools are made of fine-grained minerals like chert and jasper They are found in finer gravels which lie over the coarser gravels deposited earlier The rivers were now flowing at a higher level and had sluggish currents.

Tools of this second or Middle Stone Age cu ture are found mainly in the Wagan river near the village of Hazukheri and in the river Kadmali near Nimbahera, both in Chitorgarh district. A few of them are also known from the river Berach near Chitorgarh and from the Chambal near Kota.

The change from Early Stone Age to Middle Stone Age is not abrupt but slow and smooth It is possible that a few people had con e into the area and replaced the older ones after co existing with the older peoples for some time

Alternately the older people themselves had learnt new ways of making stone tools and adjusting themselves to a changing environment. Europe and West Asia people who made similar tools belonged to the human species known as Neanderthal man This species became extinct about 35 000 years ago

The Late Stone Age

We do not exactly know when this culture came to an end and what followed it immediately The thick silt deposits which cover the gravels yielding Middle Stone Age tools are devoid of any archaeological materials. On the surface of these silts and on rocky outcrops are however found, remains of a Third Stone Age culture which the archaeologists call Mesolithic or Late Stone Age we know much more about this culture because (i) it flourished quite recently probably from 10,000 B C to 2 000 B C and (ii) deposits bearing its remains have not been disturbed at least not significantly by river action. The authors of this new culture were the men of the species Homo—sapiens the species to which all living races of man belong.

The tools of these Mesolithic peoples are known as *microliths* because they were small, barely more than four centimeters made out of thin parallel—sided flakes (technically called blades) which were detached from small prepared cores. These blades or sections of them were blunted on one or more sides to provide blunt sides for hafting and had a sharp edge on one side for use. A series of such blade tools or microliths were hafted together in a slotted wood or bone stick to provide composite tools like knives, arrows, harpoons, etc. In this age for the first time bow and arrow came into use and man therefore acquired greater mastery on hunting skills. These microliths occur far more widely than tool of any of the preceding two stone ages. They are found scattered on numerous rocky elevations in Mewar Actually on these rock outcrops raw materials, especially chert, were easily available. Hunting bands squatted on these rock outcrops during their expeditions and taking advantage of the easily available raw material manufactured their tools They took the finished tools with them and left the waste material on the sites. For this reason we find very few finished tool on these factory sites but lot of manufacturing debris Such factory sites are to be found everywhere in Mewar they are most numerous in district Udaipur The writer has collected large quantities of such tools near the villages of Bichri and Dabok and further north near Gotipa and Belathal not far from Vallabh nagar

A good picture of the culture of this period is provided by the



Pottery from Bagor



Early Palaeolithic Tools from river Gambhiri



Middle Palaeolithic Tools from river Wagan



Pottery from Ahar



Early Palaeolith a Tools from river

excavations conducted jointly by the University of Poona and the State Department of Archaeology Rajasthan at Bagor in district Bhilwara

The stone age people here settled on a sand dune overlooking the river Kothari Their stone tools are found scattered on the surface of the dune itself *But what is more their tools, pottery animal bones and burials occur* to a depth of 1 75 m. below the surface of the dune showing that man had lived here for a very long time. They lived on stone paved floors made from schist slaks quarried from rocks across the river and from pebbles picked up from the river bed They also raised circular huts which were lined on the periphery with stones to protect them from winds. On these floors are to be found quantities of microliths as also bones of animals which the people ate These bones are always broken and split open for the extraction of marrow and they are often charred showing that meat was regularly roasted on fire Stone hammers found on these floors bear tell tale marks of use on them They were used for breaking bones as well as for making stone tools. The animals killed and eaten by these people were all wild they include wild cattle the hog deer the spotted deer the barasingha, the Indian wild boar the Indian jackal the river turtle and the monitor lizard Although these people did not know agriculture and animal husbandry *they were good—hunters and had quite a secure food* supply which made a permanent settlement at one place possible They buried their dead within the settlement in an extended position with head to the north west and face to the north-east. Chunks of meat were kept near the dead as food for them these now survive as bare bones.

There are quite a few such habitation sites in Mewar and their excavation will throw further light on this culture These Late Stone Age hunters seem to have come into Mewar from outside for there is no evidence of a link between their culture and the preceding Middle Stone Age Similarities of this culture exist in north Gujarat. It is possible that the Bhils, Minas and other tribal people of Mewar are descendants of these hunting peoples of the Late Stone Age

The First Farmers

Around 2000 B C. or a little earlier the first agricultural communities appeared in Mewar These people practised farming and animal husbandry They founded the first villages many of which have been occupied by man ever since The food producing economy of these villages made in time the generation of surplus possible This surplus could support specialist *craftsmen like* metalsmiths, carpenters, etc. Thus slowly economy became more diversified

These later Bagoreans also buried their dead within their settlement. But they kept the bodies in a flexed position with legs and arms folded as in a sleeping posture. The orientation of the dead was either south east north west or east west. They kept along with the dead body a variety of offerings. These include groups of clay pots (originally obviously containing food and water) metal tools, ornaments of stone and bone and also large chunks of meat now surviving as bare bones In one case a complete necklace of thirty five beads was found on the neck of the skeleton. Another find with the same burial was a terracotta spindle whorl of plano—convex shape with a frieze of punctured triangles on the flat surface. This chalcolithic (copper and stone using culture) came to an end around the middle of the first millennium B C. with the introduction of iron

But another and more truly farming culture had also come into existence in Mewar towards the beginning of the second millennium B C This culture is kown to us largely from excavations on the mound of Dhul Kot near Ahar village a suburb of Udaipur and to some extent from the site of Gilund on the river Banas in district Chitorgarh This culture which we call Ahar culture from the site of that name is known from nearly fifty sites in Mewar Most of them are concentrated on the Berach and Banas rivers in Udaipur and Chitorgarh districts but they extend eastward into Bhilwara Ajmer and Tonk districts along the Banas and her tributaries. These people seem to have come into Mewar from Malwa where there is evidence of farming settlements at a slightly earlier date

The Aharian villages were of substantial sizes, occupying several acres of ground The houses were made of mud walls on stone foundation. There is evidence also of the use of mud and kiln burnt bricks and of large, complex structures at Gilund. These people cultivated rice and at a later stage also millet they domesticated cattle goat, sheep dog and pig. They supplemented their food by hunting fishihg and fowling as there is evidence of the bones of deer fish and birds from Ahar

One respect in which the early farming culture of Ahar differs from the chalcolithic culture of Bagor as well as from other chalcolithic cultures of India is the complete absence of a blade tool industry Since stone blades supplied the components of most of the cutting, reaping and hunting tools in chalcolith c cultures their absence at Ahar and related sites implies that Aharians had adequate supply of metal tools. There is evidence for this inference in the form of several copper axes and a few bits of copper and more particularly in the discovery of a furnace with ash and metal slag at Ahar The Aharians

therefore seem to have practised copper metallurgy from the start. Inde d the availability of copper ores in the Aravallis is likely to have been the main attraction for early colonisers of the region

The ceramic industry of the Aharians was well developed and varied One of their wares is known as black and red ware because the vessels in it are fired in such a way that they are black inside and on the top of outside and red over the rest of the outside The types in this ware are mainly bowls of many shapes and sizes and occasionally lota like vessels and dishes the latter sometimes on stand. In the red slipped variety again there are several sub-wares one of which bears a close similarity to the Harappan pottery in its fine clay composition, uniform and good firing fine finish and sturdiness. The range of vessels in the red wares includes bowls and lota like vessels, cooking vessels and dishes and many kinds of storing vessels. In the grey ware the range of types is smaller but largely conforming to that met with in red wares. One feature of Ahar pottery which distinguishes it from the pottery of other contemporary cultures is the relative poverty of painted decoration in it On the other hand there is a great diversity and profusion of incised and applique designs on Ahar pottery

Radiocarbon dates suggest a period of about 1800 B C. to 1200 B C for this culture Excavation and dating of other sites may probably reveal that this culture lasted till a later date Some of the pottery shapes and terracotta spindle whorls show close similarity to sites in Iran and other countries of Western Asia It is therefore possible that these early agricultural colonisers might have been originally immigrants from Iran

A comparison of the chalcolithic cultures of Bagor and Ahar provides interesting conclusions The Aharians were full fledged farmers and had a knowledge of metallurgy They were colonising a new territory and settling on virgin ground At Bagor on the other hand an essentially hunting and food gathering people were adopting through a culture contact a good producing economy on a small scale and some other material traits of a food producing culture, it is an archaeological example of the process whereby a simple society is slowly assimilated by a technologically more advanced society

The appearance of Iron and the beginnings of historical times

At Ahar the copper using farming culture is overlain by another culture in which iron tools were in use Seals bearing Brahmi script and punch makred coins date this occupation to 2nd 3rd century before the Christian era The Iron Age settlement seems to have come into existence several centuries after the

end of the previous settlement. At Bagor on the other hand, the chalcolithic culture slowly gave way to an iron using one. Microliths here continued to be used even after the introduction of iron, thus demonstrating how primitive communities tend to be conservative even in matters of technology Iron tools found include one socketed arrowhead and one tanged arrowhead Pottery of this period is all wheelmade and some of its forms are closely comparable to those occurring at many northern sites from 4th cent. B C. onwards The iron might therefore have been introduced at Bagor around 600 B C.

By this time settled village life was well established in Mewar In the 30th century B C. the town of Madhyamika (modern Nagari near Chitor) was in existence and in the following century we find coins of Sibi Janapad being incised here Inscriptions speak of Asvamedha and Vajpeya sacrifices being performed here about the same time By second century B C therefore Mewar had developed stable political unity and from here on the cultural story of Mewar belongs to the domain of history proper

N V Misra

early sculptural art of mewar

The antiquity of fine arts in Mewar can be pushed back towards the beginning of Ahar Culture datable to about 2000 B C. Excava tions at ahar (near Udaipur) have thrown a flood of light on ancient ceramic industry and art of painting on earthen pots at such an early date The ent re material is now preserved in the Archaeological Museum at the site itself It is very much regretted that no stone or clay human figurine worth reference but for a few hand made pieces of the proto historic period has till now been discovered or excavated at Ahar

Sunga Period

we are equally in darkness about the plastic arts of Mewar till the Sunga period, though a number of punch-marked copper coins, datable to the Mauryan period, have been picked up from Ahar and Nagari. Madhyamika (i e present Nagari distant about 8 miles from Chitor) was the seat of **Sibi** republic during this period a currency issued from this place refers to **Sibi Janapada.** The famous **Brahmi** Inscriptions from Nagari bear testimony to the existence of a massive structure dedicated to Samkarshana Vasudeva for which an enclosure was built there by Sarvatata towards the second first century B C Some scholars **feel** that the carvings of Krishna and Bala deva worshipped at Nagari were in the form of wooden statues which got destroyed in due course of time or they were engraved on stone slabs such as the **Ayagapatas** found in Mathura region But this does not appear to be very reasonable because that was the age when life-size stone images of Yakshas and even Baladeva were chiselled in the vicinity of Mathura and its vicinity Moreover stone

was available in sufficient quantity at Nagari itself It is then no wonder that stones images of the above **Vaishnava** divinities were carved for worship in the **Narayanavatika** of Madhyamika It appears that all the contemporary images at this place got damaged because of the invasion during the Mughal period or even earlier Excavations at Nagari also brought to light a few Sunga terracotta figurines, including some moulded plaques of goddess **Vasudhara** holding two fish in one of her outstretched hands as also in the contemporary finds from Mathura and Rairh (near Tonk)

Kushana Period

Very little is known about the sculptural art of Mewar during the early centuries of Christian Era Excavations at Ahar yielded a few fragmentary terracotta plaques such as potbellied Kubera or Ganapati, female dancer female torso and votive tank pieces, now exhibited in Ahar Museum

Gupta period

The Yupa Pillar Inscription of V S 282 (255 58 A D) from Nandasa (near Gangapur Bhilwara) bears testimony to the performance of Vedic rituals in the region. It refers to the worship of a number of Brahmanic deities though contemporary statues thereof have not been discovered so far Nagari of course continued to remain a centre of **Vaishnavism** during the post Kushana period. The fifth century inscription from this place and now in Ajmer Museum, refers to the construction of a structure dedicated to the **Feet of Vishnu** while a later epigraph testifies to the construction of a Temple dedicated to **Manoratha Svami** A Brahmanic structure with an early form of stone **Sikhara** appears to have been constructed at Nagari during the 5 6th century A.D A few fragments including the flutted **amalaka** can still be seen at Nagari The temple was provided with a crocodile shaped **Pranala** for the outlet of sacred water from the main shrine A number of sculptural pieces, carved in the art of 5-6th century and preserved at the site bear close affinity with contemporary **Torana** pieces from the neighbouring region of Dasapura (Mandasor) The Nagari **torana** pillars present carvings of **mithuna** figures the horizontal stone lintel is divided into several panels and present numerous details of the **Kiratarjuna** theme. These are quite precious sculpures in the realm of Indian art It is on this lintel that we come across **one of the earliest representations of dancing Siva** thus bearing connections with contemporary Gupta sculptures from Bhumara Nachana Kuthara Deogarh etc. **This is the earliest 'Nataraja in the plastic art of Rajasthan**

More than 50 years ago Dr D R Bhandarkar had excavated a brick temple

at Nagari A number of Gupta terracotta plaques studded on the exterior of this structure have been recovered
The same are of 3 types.

(a) Moulded bricks with human busts.
(b) animals in profile
(c) floral decorations

Some of the human figurines delineated therein, may be identified with characters in the satirical plays **(Chaturbhanas)** In fact **they have nothing to do with Greek art.** Such clay plaques were manufactured at a number of Gupta sites in India, including the ones in the famous region of Suratgarh Hanumangarh in Bikaner division of Rajasthan. A few Gupta terracottas from Nagari are now preserved in the Deccan College at Poona while the major collection may be studied in the Rajputana Museum at Ajmer

Sculptural traditions seem to have been profusely encouraged in the regions of Udaipur and Dungarpur during the 5—6th centuries A.D thus bearing close affinity in style with contemporary specimens from Samalaji and Devanimori in Idar State My exploratory tours in the vicinity of Jagat, Tanesar and Kalyanpur in Udaipur district have confirmed the truth of this statement. **Siva-Sakti** *cult was at its height during this period and* a number of independent **Matrika** statues were carved out of the local green sh blue schist, popularly known as **Pareva** Aindri and headless Ambika statues from Jagat are now preserved in Pratap Museum at Udaipur The collections of M B College, Udaipur are equally rich in contemporary sculptures from Kalyanpura they include two statues of standing Siva and a Naga Nagi couple But most important are the schist statues which I happened to study at Tanesar distant about 3 *miles from Parshad, in district Udaipur* Besides an early Ganapati bust, this group includes an image of two armed Skanda, holding a spear in his right hand and a cock in the left The other images are those of mothers each accompanied by a child and provided with a halo behind her head. *The child* is depicted on the arm, near the leg of the mother in various playful poses and even suckled by the mother with both her hands. The utter absence of any vehicle **(vahana)** is worthy of note in this group This enables us *to suggest,* with sufficient justification, *that here was* carved the entire *group in the* form of Skanda surrounded by the **Krittikas** who nourished him since his very birth. All these images were chiselled for regular *worship* all of them have got prominent pedestals they were *probably installed together* on a platform in some contemporary temple of Skanda Karttikeya at Tanesar This has therefore got an important bearing on the cult of Skanda Kumar in



Moon God Chandra on the exterior of sanctum Sun Temple at Chitor 8th century



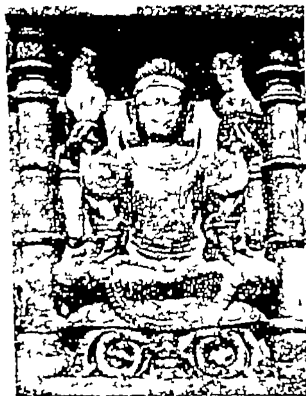
Amdri as a Mother from Jagat greenish blue sekrst Udaipur Museum 5 6th century



Dancing Ganesh in Chatura pose 10th century Ambika Temple at Jagat



Alasakanya (Sura Sunda i)
Ambika Temple at Jagat
10th Century



Marttanda Bhairava composite form of Siva and Sun exterior of a miniature shrine (Sas- Bahu Temple at Nagda) 10th century

A Unique Image

Three Headed Sakti of Vaikuntha Bijolian Bhilwara District 12th century



the image of two armed and standing **Lakulisa** is quite interesting there we find him actually carrying a staff (**lakula**) in his hand. This type of Siva Lakulish images are very few in early Indian art and one of the four armed variety is preserved in the circle office of D. G. A. at Chitor fort itself.

Most imposing of all the early mediaeval temples of Mewar is the Kalika Mata Temple at Chitor fort. In fact a structure dedicated to Sun it was constructed as early as the 8th century A. D. This is very well confirmed by its sculptural wealth also. The temple has got a provision of circumambulatory path, to go round the main sanctum. The principal exterior niches of the sanctum preserve Surya reliefs wherein the main deity is seated on a chariot driven by Arun and yoked with seven horses. This representation is to be seen just above the door lintel of the sanctum as well. The images of horse headed Asvins, on both sides are equally imposing and so also that of **Chandra** (Moon) on the right exterior niche. Here Chandra figures as one of the **Dikpalas** in strict accordance with early traditions a crescent mark behind his back is very very prominent. In fact such independent carvings of Moon God are not very frequent in Indian sculpture. The images on the outer exterior niches of this Sun Temple at Chitor are fairly well preserved noteworthy behind the one depicting churning of Ocean and studded on the left side.

A few years back I noticed an early mediaeval relief under worship at Dhod, distant about 8 miles from Jahazpur in Bhilwara district. Here Baladeva and Krishna appear as seated attendants of goddess **Gaja Lakshmi** as also in the contemporary statue discovered by me at Amjhara near Dungarpur. All these specimens depict the **Ekanamsa** aspect of Lakshmi in a slightly different manner. They bear close affinity with sculptures from Ellora in the Deccan, where the attendant divinities are shown standing on both sides of goddess Lakshmi.

Mediaeval Period

Mewar is equally rich in mediaeval sculptures datable from 10th to 14th centuries A. D. At Ahar itself we can study a number of Brahmanic and Jain temples, datable to 10-11th centuries A. D. The Gangodbhada **Kunda** of Ahar was probably built during the regime of Bhartribhatta, the Guhila ruler of Mewar. A number of sculptures studded into various niches of this tank are quite charming. The Chamunda nearby carries a fish in one of her hands as in the Paramara art of Arthuna and Chandravati Abu this refering to ***Tantric traits*** in Mewar. The so-called Mira Temple behind the Police post at Ahar may

be d ted to the 10th century the back portion preserves interesting reliefs such as stealing of butter by Krishna black smiths at work and shopkeeper (grocer) weighing with a scale All these stone reliefs have got an important bearing on the social and material life of Mewar during the 10th century Equally imposing is the Sun Temple at Tusa (near Daroli) and Vishnu Temple of Panchayantana variety at Iswal on way to gogunda both in district Uda pur

The mediaeval and late mediaeval temples at Nagda distant about 14 miles from Udaipur are also worthy of note The famous twin temples of Sasa and Bahu preserve very elegant architectural and iconographic details of late 10th and early 11th centuries A. D On the pillars of **sabhamandapa** of Sasa temple at Nagda are carved **Ramayana** scenes the door jambs preserve three—headed vishnu **(Vaikuntha)** a similar relief appears on the left exterior niche while the right exterior niche of **sabhamandapa** preserves an elegant carving of **Gajendra moksha** The back niche of a miniature shrine at the back has got a lovely relief depicting the **Marttadda Bhairava** form *i e* **blending of Surya & Siva in one form** the seated deity is provided with a crown on the head and a coat of mail of Surya on the chest, the weapons carried in four hands include two lotus flowers of Sun while the trident and the skull crowned mace are **Saiva** emblems. **It should be considered as one of the most interesting syncretic images in Indian art.** The Pratap Museum at Udaipur has *also* acquired a statue wherein the standing deity depicts the *blending of more* than two divinities of the Brahmanic pantheon.

The mediaeval temples of Chauhan art at Menal and Bijolian in district Bhilwara still preserve immense sculptural wealth of Mewar and datable to the 12th century One female statue from Bijolian is of course quite unique in Indian iconography because it represents the three—headed female counter part of **Vaikuntha** Vishnu the central face of the Goddess is that of a horse while the side faces are those of a boar and a lion. A male statue of four armed variety is of course preserved in the circle office at chitor fort but no other female relief or carving of the goddess in this particular form, is available at the present moment.

What a thrill to have a look at the **Ambika Temple at Jagat—the Khajuraho of Rajasthan !** The temple distant about *27 miles from Udaipur appears to have* been built towards the early part of 10th century one of its pillars, bearing a date as V S 1017 probably referes to some rennovation work in the temple The exteriors of the temple at Jagat are profusely studded with elegant reliefs comprising of Durga-Ambika in varied aspects, Dikpalas and a number of female figures in different moods and poses. From the point of

view of workmanship their artistic quality is quite high, they contain first rate sculptural material the themes are of course quite traditional as in most of the mediaeval temples at Khajuraho and other places. From point of view of iconography also some of the reliefs at Jagat are quite important such as —

(a) Mahishamardini Durga in the exterior niches of the main sanctum and the **pranala mandapa**. The relief now in the main back niche of sanctum, even depicts a parrot perched to the left of goddess Mahishamardini and thus recalls the **Sukapriya Ambika** aspect of the **devi**

(b) Narayani Durga i.e. **Vaishnavi** seated over a human corpse relief on the exterior lower part of the main sanctum. The goddess carries all the emblems of Vishnu but for a human corpse as her vehicle. This is quite unusual in Indian iconography

(c) Mahishamardini fighting with the Bull demon the latter is shown in full human form and that is very unusual

(d) Varahi on the doorjamb of entrance porch. Here she carries a fish in one of her hands recalling the **Tantrika** aspect of the goddess. This trait is also to be seen in dancing Varahi on Pratihara Matrika lintel from Abaneri, datable to the late 8th century

(e) Dancing Ganesa in **Chatura** pose in the **sabhamandap** of Ambika Temple at Jagat, is one of the few elegant statues of this particular deity. The **Chatura** pose is very imposing and unusual for Ganesa though we do come across this in case of dancing **Virabhadra** Siva on Abaneri panel now in Jaipur Museum.

The sculptural traditions of Mewar kept alive during the subsequent periods as well. The regime of Maharana Kumbha witnessed great activity in the realm of painting sculpture and architecture. A number of skilled **sthapatis** and masons were given state-patronage at this stage. Noteworthy are two families, one of Jaita and his sons who were incharge of construction works at Chitor including the famous Tower of Fame i.e. **Kirttistambha** at Chitor. It still stands as a store-house of contemporary sculptures of this region. **Sutradhara** Mandana and his followers appear to have been quite active in Udaipur and Kumbhalgarh. It was probably under their instructions that some religious edifices at Ekalingaji and Kumbhalgarh came into existence. In Mewar Mandana's successors appear to have participated, *from time to time* in sculptural and architectural activities in Mewar including the building of Nauchauki and

Rajasamudra dam, near Kankroli All this is confirmed by contemporary epigraphs and sculptural remains as well The Jagdish temple at Udaipur preserves for us a rich variety of 17th century sculptures of the region and so is the case with carved pillars and ceilings of Nauchauki at Rajasamand. In fact Mewar has to contribute a lot to the growth of fine arts in India including the sculptures and terracottas of different periods. The rich tradition of preparing moulded terracotta plaques is still preserved by the potters of village Molela, near Khamnor in Udaipur district

R.C Agrawal

society and culture in medieval mewar

The history of the society and culture in medieval Mewar is of greater interest and importance than the political events, full of intrigues, murders and military compaigns For us to-day the people s history has a great charm and utility But the task to construct such a history is not an easy one The sources for analysing it are indeed meagre. Some incidental references from chronicles inscriptions archival assets, sculptures and paintings are of some value to arrive at the facts of the matter

Social structure

The Maharanas of Mewar were at the apex of the social organi sation Belief in the sublime purity of their descent from Sun and Rama, and in the missions they were called upon to fulfil gave to the rulers a sense of self respect. They enjoyed a great faith among their people The words they uttered, were taken to have descended from **Shree Mukh**, the pious mouth and their person was dignified as **Shreeji** a great being Bapa, Khumman, Kumbha Sanga Pratap and Ram Singh were rulers of exceptional qualities heroism and strength of character The existence of each marked an era of strength and dignity They were so humble in their behaviour that they always regarded them the **dewanji** of God Eklingaji the family deity the real ruler of the state This presupposes an absence of egoism, arbitration and absolutism The rulers identified them selves as agents of the Almighty They were the chief executive, the military and the judiciary authority of the state.

The Maharanas loved to have simple dwellings consisting of a few sets of rooms of the most ordinary dimension, free from show and superfluity Maharana Kumpha, who happened to be a great conqueror of his age had a mansion at Kumbhalgarh free from ostentations and decoration of oriental type While as a great architect he constructed gigantic forts, towers, the public works unrivalled in the history of the world Even the palaces of Rana Amar Singh and Raj Singh though influenced by the Mughal architectural designs and style, are less artistic and docorative than the Amber palaces of the same period The basic simplicity and chastity of the dwelling places was a speciality of the Sisodias of medieval times.

We notice the same stanadard of simplicity in dress and diet of the Maharanas, though it was of a standard suited to their offices. Of course, on festive occassions and royal *darbars* their food and dress were rich and costly After the Mughal impact the celebration of festivals took to the Delhi pattern.

Next in rank to the Maharana were the nobles who enjoyed special honour and privilleges, which never fell to the lot of the common people. Within their jagirs they were miniature Maharanas attended upon by all the decorums power and prestige enjoyed by the rulers of the State. But the existence of an organised feudalism was a boon to the age. The patriotic nobles were always ready to lay down their lives for the glory of the ruling dynasty and the country This institution, though a negation of political authority elsewhere was one of the most powerful institution in Mewar The powerful nobility was an ever flowing stream of strength and could supply the need of war at a minute s call

Both the kingship and the nobility had a seraglio of hundreds of women, supervised by a special staff of female officers and attended upon by maid servants attached to this office.

The nobles in Mewar were a powerful factor to be counted in all matters—political and military The guarding of the fort af Chitor by Udai Singh, during Akbar s invasion, was in accordance with the general opinion of the main Sardars of Mewar The dethronement of Jagmal and the installations of Pratap are the examples of the effective authority of the nobles wishes.

But these conditions could not hold good under all circumstances. The flower of Rajput chivalry which was engaged in war for about several hundred years could not go on fighting for ever and betrayed signs of decay even in the time of Pratap Some notable desertions such as those of Sakta, Jagmal,

Sagar and Megh Singh proved baneful to its cause. The prolonged wars also led to the destruction of the able warrior and administrative class which adversely affected the ruling class and the general public at large. After Raj Singh we notice a kind of general degeneration in the fighting class of Mewar which ultimately could not offer the desired opposition to the wanton aggression of the Marathas who freely ravaged their country and drained the resources of the state. The weakness of the later Ranas also enabled the feudal vassals to establish petty despotism. In the later days depriving the peasant proprietors in whom Mewar abounded, of their hereditary rights in the land. The entire structure began to show signs of losing its age honoured usefulness. Conspiracies began to be hedged in the minds of those who used to be regarded as the trusted pillars of the State.

Gradually in Mewar as elswehere there grew fiefs of all kinds and of all grades from the **Solas** to **Battisi** and **Pattayats** to **Bhomiyas**. In their own way they all within their region, exercised powers of a practicaly indepedent princes. Even one who had a bit of land, cultivated by peasants, could provide a horse which he rode to exercise his authority.

Below the nobles there was, as middle class mainly consisting of the merchants. They led simple and temperate lives. Only during festive occasions they took pride in showing off their wealth and impressing upon those who were around them of their rich and luxurious style of living. This was the class which carried on extensive trade and commerce and if needed financed the state. Their main profession was also money lending. Several families of Nandwana Mahajans carried trade and agriculture side by side in Mewar.

As the merchants happened to be rich, they became men of distinction. They occupied foremost place in the Social hierarchy and displayed intelligence and zeal in promoting the interest of their families age to from age. They imported a great stimulous to the cause of their religion by subscribing their wealth for construction of temples and organising congregation of fellow religionists to be held at various centres. As they were reputed to be industrious, intelligent and thrifty their services were also utilized in the administration of the state and managing the finances. Though valour was not their special trait, they marked out their career also as generals. Maharana Sanga appointed Bharmal as the commander of the fort of Ranthambhore. His two sons Bhama Shah and Tarachand distinguished themselves as great warriors and administrators. Both of them fought side by side with Maharana Pratap. Bhama Shah and Tara chand soon rose to the position of **Pradhan** and district officer of Godwad respectively. *Bhama* Shah continued to remain **Pradhan**

of Maharana Amar Singh I, till he was removed from the position by death on January 26 1600 Bhama Shah's son Jiwa Shah and his son Akhaya Raj held the hereditary office of **Pradhan** in the reign ot Amar Singh and Karan Singh respectively

In the Social hierarchy the Brahmans played a vital role They were divided into a number of subsections such as Shrimalis Nagar Bhattmewaras Sikhwal Gaur Sanadhyas. Dadhich Dashora Paliwals etc These Brahmans were engaged in both secular and religious pursuits Those Brahmans who claimed moral and religious leadership engaged themselves in helping people in performing religious sacrifices and domestic ceremonies Jhoting, Dhaneshwar Bhatt and Dakshinamurti were renowned for their learning and skill in officiating at sacrifices and religious ceremonies. Attending to the daily services of worship at temples of deities had also grown into a profession. Some of the leading Paliwals were the family priests to the chiefs of the state The Brahmins have been chief astrologers and Katha reciters of the Maharanas Some of them held important offices of the Master of ceremony kitchen superintendent and office in charge of royal wardrobe The Acharya family was reputed for its proficiency in medicine for which it was adequately honoured

As war condition was a general feature in medieval Rajasthan, some of the Brahmans also took to military career Purohit Garibadas was a great military general of Maharana Raj Singh One Madhusdan Bhatt was sent along with Ram Singh Jhala to wait upon Sadullah Khan and dissuade him from his destructive designs against Chitor

As these Brahmans enjoyed considerable local prestige owing to the fact of their birth and also they were landowners, they regarded themselves as the custodians of Hindu culture They abhorred contamination with foreign blood and maintained ceremonial purity The Brahmans of this category are even now found among the Nagars, Bhattmewara Avadichyas and Srimalis who do not have food cooked by a Brahman other than their own caste A certain set of Brahmans engaged themselves in agriculture The Srimali Paliwal Menaria, Nagda and Khandelwal Brahmins were mostly agiriculturists.

In the socio-political hierarchy Kayasthas had important and independent role In Mewar Bhatnagars Pancholis and Mathurs have been very prominent in offering their services as administrators and warriors. Pancholi Biharidas ancestors occupied high position in Mewar service from the 14th century onward Pancholi Bhagchand was a daring general of Jagat Singh. The

members of the Sahiwala family which had the privilege to affix their signs in the form of **Sahi** were the traditional loyal officers of the state. The services of this class was most useful in drafting and interpreting letters going to and coming from the Mughal court.

In between the social order of the Rajputs and the Brahmans there is a caste of the charans which exercised a great respectibility and influence in Mewar As an equal partner in war and peace his place was enviable. Many a charans fought to their last in the decisive battles of Mewar Some of them happened to be composers of poems and songs of heroic valour of the actors in the fields of battle The Bhats different from the Charans, acted as genealogists and concerned themselves about the pedigree of families belonging to various castes.

The life of the classes engaged in crafts and agriculture was harder compared with the classes mentioned above. They usually toiled for the upper classes and had bare necessities for their share. They had to undergo forced labour and had to bear the burden of taxes imposed time and again Of course they had not to suffer from want of ordinary food and clothing under normal circumstances. Their fate in times of famine scarcity and war was not free from miseries and sufferings As regards peasants, they were not very happy class of people Their living conditions and standard of living were low They were generally the victims of the oppressions of the State officers, usually on touring duties.

Social habits and practices

Samskaras occupied a significant position in the socio-religious life of Mewar In honour of the birth of a child great rejoicings were observed which included songs and distribution of coconuts and other articles. The **dwijas** observed the rite of initiation. Marriage was also respected as a social obligation Those days the marriages were expensive on account of the dowery and neg system, and were a burden on the parents Consequently the birth of a female child was taken as an undesirable event. Our period has ample evidence of the fact that the kings, courtiers Sudras and members of wealthier class were polygamous. Though marriage has all its attraction the fate of the women, who lost her husband was pathetic A Hindu widow s life long decendence on the male members, and her subordinate position under young wives, naturally subjected her to a hard lot. A number of documents also throw sufficient light upon a practice known as divorce

which was so common Prostitution existed side by side with polygamy and widowhood during the period under review

We have numerous examples during this period of the practice of **Sati** through which from the princesses down to the common women ladies made an end of their lives. The multiplicity of **Sati—**slabs and palm impressions of medieval times which can be seen in almost all the villages and towns of Mewar show that the regular wars which Mewar had to wage gave a sort of stimulous to this system. Associated with the practice of **Sati** there was another rite which is called **Jauhar** through which the ladies made an end of themselves without waiting for the death of their husband When Bahadur Shah invaded Chitor in 1535 A.D Rani Karmati committed **Jauhar** alongwith several ladies of the royal household and of nobles. During the invasion of Chitor in 1568 A.D by Akbar **Jauhar** was performed at open spaces and near the houses in the fort.

The amusements sports and games also played an important part in the life of both the rich and the poor people of Mewar Among indoor games gambling with dice was popular during our period There is a reference in the **Sarnath Inscription** of Ahor to gamblers who were required to offer a bagful of money of their stakes for the maintenance of the temple of Varaha. Mandan in his **Raj Vallabh** has recommended the construction of a gambling hall atta ched to the king s palace Pictorial and classical sources of the period under review refer to a board game called chess or **Shatranj Chaupar** is anotheri mpor tant indoor game which was usually played by two persons at the quiet hours of the night. Other indoor games **Charbhar Narchari Govind Prema**,etc. We have ample depiction of wrestling and boxing in painting and sculptured art, which shows that these pastimes were cultivated as physical culture during the period under review There are also references to animal fights between elephants tigers, leopards boars and bulls as favourite sports at the courts in Mewar Maharana Amar Singh and Raj Singh enjoyed fights between these animals. In sculptured art at Raj Samudra there are depiction of various birds and animals and their fights Hunting was a favourite amnusement of Kings and nobles of our period

The art of music formed a part of entertainment both for the rich and the poor during the period under review Maharana Kumbha was a great appreciator of the musical art. His commentatory of the **Gita Govind** and the work of **Sangitraj** are outstanding instances of his proficiency in that branch The themes of music and dance depicted in several panels of Kirtistambha, Jagadish temple and others show that right from the court down to the villages people could find time to enjoy and participate in singing and dancing.

The observance of festivals in Mewar was a religious as well as social obligation. The sight of the procession of Gangore had always been the imposing and exhilarating sight at Udaipur. In Mewar **Dashera** used to be celebrated in a magnificient style by holding **darbars** receiving **nazars** and conferring ranks and honour on deserving officers. On this occasion horses and elephants were brought for display. They were duly washed and groomed and decked. Decorated elephants and horses were duly worshipped and were paraded in line for review. According to an old tradition the Maharanas used to move out from their palaces to organise on the day of Dashera a campaign agains their neighbours on the pretext of the **Aheria hunt.** The festival of **dewali** had a special significance for all classes and communities. Of all the festivals of gaiety **Holi** may be accounted as the most popular of the festivals in Mewar as elsewhere. Everybody big or small old or young participated in merry making.

Religious Life

The epigraphic and literary sources testify that the manifestation of religious life was embodied in Vedic beliefs and practices. Rana Kshetra Singh and Maharana Kumbha were reputed performers of Vedic sacrifices. They were in vogue among the richer sections of society also. The worship of Shiva has been the faith of the Maharanas and the people from time immemorial. From the inscriptional literary and archival records it appears that **Lakulisha** sect was fairly popular. Other sects associated with Shaivism were those of **Samnayasins khakis siddas** and **nagas.** They had their monastries or **akharas** at various places in Mewar. Towards Shivasim the Maharanas were so devoted that they took pride in designating themselves as **diwanji** and looked upon the deity as the real ruler of Mewar.

From both archaeological and epigraphic evidences it is clear that the mother goddess was worshipped in Mewar in one form or another. The Bana Mata was worshipped as a family deity.

The worship of Vishnu in various forms and under several names dates back to some centuries before the birth of Christ. The **Eklinga Inscription** refers to the construction of a temple *in honour* of Dwarkadhisha by Mokal. Krishna temples at Kadiyan, Chitor and Eklinga were built during the 15*th* century. Rana Kumbha also constructed a temple of Kumbha Shyam at Kumbhalgarh. The coming of *Srinathji* to *Nathdwara* and Dwarkadhish at Kankroli marked a *turning point* in the development of Vaishnavism of Pushtimarga order in Mewar. The rulers and the ruled in Mewar were by no

means less enthusiastic in the cause of Vaishnavism The name of Mira has become immortal for the devotion to Krishna.

Pilgrimage also played an important role in the religious life of the Hindus of Mewar Paying homage and visiting pilgrim places has been regarded as an act of religious duty and merit. Thousands of Mewaris performed pilgrimages to Gaya Gomti Dwarka Haridwar Mathura Badrinath Onkarnath during the period of our review In Mewar itself there were pilgrim centres at Gadbor Dhulev Bigod. Sinhad Kankroli and Matri Kundiyan where thousands of people from Mewar and outside offered their homage to the shrines located at these centres-every year

Education

From the inscriptions and literary works of our period we notice that Mewar never lagged behind in the progress of learning during this period The period under review saw the revival of Sanskrit literature in Mewar In the **Nath Inscription** there is a reference to Kushika and other **Munis** who possessed a vast knowledge of several shastras Amar Kavi was a composer of this inscription The Chirva inscription of 1273 records the names of several Jain Acharyas who were great scholars among whom Parashwachandra was the chief composer of the text. The writer of the Chitor and the Achaleshwar Inscriptions was Veda Sharma of great intelligence.

The tradition of the past was upheld by several authors of our period of whom Maharana Kumbha was a great scholar and poet. He was well versed in the **Vedas Smritis Mimamsa, Naya, Rajniti Upanishads, Tarka** and **Sahitya.** He was familiar with **Karnataki Maharastri** and other language His commentary on the **Gita-Govinda** is a testimony to the wide command that he had over Sanskrit prose and poetry Several works on music like the **Sangitraj** the Sangit **Mimamsa,** the Sudprabandha, the **Rasikpriya** and the **Sangita Ratnakar** have been ascribed to him Mandan, Govind, Atri and Mahesh were the reputed writers of Kumbha s age

Maharana Raimal who was also a patron of learning honoured Maheshwara the composer of the **Eklinga Prashasti** by offering him the title of poet laureate of his court.

From the reigon of Amar Singh a distinct bias in favour of the study of Sanskrit is noticeable The **Amarsar** of Pandit Jiwadhar is an admirable exposition on the art of writing poetry and is blended with the historical facts. The **Amar Bhushan** a treatise on Astronomy shows that study of this

branch was not neglected During the reign of Jagat Singh I Sanskrit language seems to have been widely studied Among the numerous works produced during Jagat Singh s reign the most note worthy are the **Jagat Simhastaka** by Mohan Bhatt the **Jagat Simhakavya** by Raghunath and the **Jagannath Rai Prashasti** by Lakshmi Nath which though primarily meant as literary pieces of excellent metrical device are useful for furnishing historical details of the Rana s time This bias grew rapidly until the reign of Raj Singh gave it further momentum with the result that the age witnessed some of the finest production of Sanskrit

The greatest name amongst the poets of the age of Raj Singh is that of Ranchhoda Bhatt, the celebrated writer of the **Amar Kavya** and the **Rajprashasti Mahakavya**, as an independent and corroborative authority on the history of Mewar Both these works are remarkable historical **Kavyas** possessing elegance and superbness of style. Next to him is Sada Shiva an inhabitant of Banaras who came to Mewar where according to him the Muslim power had not yet overwhelmed the Hindu culture and where there was free scope for his talent to shine. His work, the **Rajratnakar** is a distinguished historical work and though written in an exaggerated manner is a fine specimen of graceful style in Sanskrit. Another work, the **Rajratnakar** by Dhundi Raj deals with the methods of testing precious stones. The **Raj Simhastaka** by Mukand another literary piece reveals the perfection of grace of diction and metre attained by that age

Among the poets of Hindi Rajasthani school the first name is that of Man Kavi who wrote the **Raj Vilas**, a poetical work in the flowery style giving the story of the exploits and adventures of Raj Singh s time

It was during this period of peace that public interest was diverted towards local songs pertaining to the war like glory of the heroes of Mewar Shyam Gopal Das Dudavat, Rama Ashrya, Jogodas Achaldas, Jata Mahiyaria Sadumal, Man Singh Ashrya, Jeth Ram *Dadhivadia and Kesu were the poets who possessed a rich and flowery style* and deserve to be read with great interest. From the point of view of history they afford an inexhaustible store of facts, which though mixed up with a lot of unhistorical *legendary* matter have an indirect value of their own

The development of **Vamshavali** literature in Mewari prose dur ng this period, deserves a brief notice We come across a large *number of* **Vamshavalis** or works on genealogies compiled during the *period They are,* generally brief yet preserve several *traditional* stories of the history of

Mewar The most important of them are the **Suryavamsh Tawarikh Vamshavali Vamshavali Ranajini Sisod Vamshavali** etc.

While Sanskrit and Mewari had monopolised literature Persian language flourished in official correspondence voluminous contemporary correspondence of the period shows how the elegant and ornate style of the Mughals was adopted in the letters that were sent to the Mughal courts The introduction of Persian in state correspondence influenced the court vocabulary in which many Persian words became common and are in existence to this day

Art of Painting and Architecture

During this period Mewar developed its own art of painting In the evolution of Mewari painting the Jain miniature paintings of illustrated manuscripts of the 13th to 16th centuries exercised a wide and profound influence By the end of the 16th century the school entered a new phase during the time of Rana Pratap and Rana Amar Singh. Some Ragini and Bhagawat paintings were executed at Chavand in or about 1605 A.D The Mughal contact also influenced the Mewari **Kalam.** A new impetus was given to the art by Karan Singh I who erected the **Chhoti Chitra Shali** at Udaipur palace, decorated with secular and religious pictures and portraits in which the art, though essentially Hindu in character reveals assimilation of the Mughal style Gradually the vigorous and spontaneous Rajput **Kalam** yielded to the fantastic colouring of Shah Jahan s time and the Badi Chitra Shali of Sangram Singh II is full of specimen of this florid painting

This period bound by the forces of religion and personal taste led to the growth of a style of architecture distinct in Mewar It appropriated to the beautiful Gujrati style which yielded some of the finest buildings of Medieval Mewar The best specimens of this style are offered by the Kirtistambha Ranakpur temple and Mira s temple marked by superb sculptural decorations Next stage shows the indomitable influence of the Mughal style. The contact between the two races influenced the Rajput architecture to a great extent. The earliest trace of such influence is to be found in some of the palaces built by Amar Singh like Amar Mahal and Badipol Of course in these palaces the influence of the Mughal architectural ideas is noticeable only in matters of detail and not in the conception of architectural techniques. The modified arches profuse decoration and ornamentation of pillars and stone latices distinguish these constructions from the simple structure of Udai Singh at Moti Magri and the gigantic edifice of Pratap at Chavand. His successor Karan Singh who had many occasions to observe the Mughal

architecture built Moti Mahal Manik Chowk, Zanana Mahal and Dilkhush Mahal inside the main palaces at Udaipur The fine workmanship and the use of polished marble approximate them to the Mughal art. The palaces and gardens lai l out by Jagat Singh and Raj Singh with a full display of fountains and domed chambers are brilliant specimens of the assimilated style

But this fusion of the Rajput and the Mughal art in the royal architecture did not mean the displacement of the indigenous art The temple of Jagannath Rai at Udaipur built by Rana Jagat Singh in 1651 A.D at the cost of fifteen lakhs of rupees for instance is a remarkable structure of vigorous indigenous architectural and well designed sculpture It is a living monument of unsurpassed engineering skill Similarly the Nowchauki constructed by Rana Raj Singh between 1662 and 1676 at Rajnagar is a fine edifice breathing peace and elegance The perfection of its proportion harmony of its designs and minute carving of its figures makes it almost a rival to the Delwara temple of Abu or the Sas Bahu temple of Nagda

Economic Condition

On the whole in Mewar there prevailed prosperity and plenty While describing the land of Medpat [Mewar] with hilly surroundings, the author of the Achleshawra Inscription says that it is an abode of everything that is beautiful in the world. The writer of the **Eklinga Inscription** corroborates this view by stating that it excels paradise itself and that its splendour has deprived all other cities and citizens of the pride of their glory It is true that the description given by these writers suffers from hyperbolical delineation the location of Mewar within the river system of the Banas Khari Bedach Kothari etc., made it the chief nucleus of civilization A large number of towns, situated within the alluvial zone of these rivers became the centres of population and prosperous mart of the region.

Though the roads leading to the interior of the country were not so encouraging Mewar never suffered from the want of communication Chitor Bhilwara, Ahar Delwara, etc., were on main routes of trade and travel There were clearly defined inns in which travellers and merchants could pass their nights in comfort free from the feeling of insecurity The road building and inn building activities which were traditional to the Hindus were followed by the rulers and the charitable people of the land. A bridge which was built at Chitor by Alauddin Khilji of course to serve his military end proved beneficial to the people at large for transport and communication for generations.

The agricultural produce of Mewar as a whole did not differ from what is to-day except for the newly introduced stuff and vegitables. Wheat, gram, maize pulses, rice and hemp were sown in Mewar The method employed in agriculture was nearly the same as we find to day The cultivators condition, as assessed from the number of taxes and cesses they had to pay was subjected to oppressive exaction. Similarly the **Sahukara** led to the accumulation of peasants indebtedness. The position of the landless cultivators was no less awkward. This was not a novelty in Mewar It was the abject state from which the tillers of soil everywhere in India suffered

In Mewar as elsewhere craftsmanship was hereditary Cloth-making was a widely spread and important industry The people living in region of Chitor Ahar and Akola were expert in printing, while Bhilwara Bigod Arni region was well known for metal work. Wood work was a speciality of Kherad area On account of the growth of the capital town iron work, leather work, gun work, became a speciality at Udaipur Refined work in metals and stones in general and in gold and silver in particular developed in towns of importance.

However the normal trend of the peaceful life enjoyed by the people of Mewar was greatly distrubed on account of war and famines which were so common during the days of devastation The repeated invasions of the Turks, the Mughals and the Marathas affected the economic vitality of Mewar The campaigns against them were very costly During the Akbar s invasion of chitor 30 000 lives were lost. The Mughals the Marathas and the Pindaries, all had imposed on the princes and the people the obligation to contribute regularly to their coffer The frequency of famines also caused great distress to the public at large

G N Sharma

मेवाड़ की चित्रकला

उदयपुर की घुमावदार सकड़ी ऊपर की ओर चढ़ती सटपटी गलियों में से थककर हांफकर किसी भी १०-७५ वर्ष पुरानी हवेली में घुसे आइये—या तो आपको द्वार पर ही किवाड़ के दोनों तख्तों पर चित्रित एक पैर व एक नितम्ब पर सारे बदन का भार दिये दूसरे पैर का घुमाव दिये हाथ में मोरछल लिये दो सुन्दरियां स्वागत करती मिलेंगी अथवा दालान या किसी कक्ष में घुसने पर दीवार के निचले भाग में चारों ओर दौड़ती हाथियों की अवलि दिखाई देगी। इनकी रेखाओं का वेग व आकृतियों का सौंदर्य सहज ही आपको मोह लेगा-इतना कि मेवाड़ की कला परम्परा जानने की आपकी इच्छा स्वतः ही बलवती हो उठेगी।

इसमें संदेह नहीं कि मेवाड़ की चित्रकला यहाँ की वीरता के साथ ही आकर्षक रही है। ऐतिहासिक खोज ने मेवाड़ की कला को कई पड़ावों में से होता हुआ दिखाया है। राजनैतिक उथल पुथल एवं सभ्यता के आदान प्रदान से यहाँ की चित्र शैली में समय-समय पर पर्याप्त परिवर्तन होता आया है। इस दृष्टि से शैली व वैशिष्ट्य को ध्यान में रखकर हम मेवाड़ की चित्रकला के इतिहास को निम्न खंडों में विभक्त कर सकते हैं —

(१) पूर्व प्रस्तर काल।
(२) आहड़ के बर्तनों पर की आयतों का काल।
(३) गुर्जर प्रभाव काल।
(४) मेवाड़ का निजस्व काल।
(५) मुगल प्रभाव काल।

पिछले कुछ वर्षों के अन्वेषणों ने जिसमें डाक्टर सत्यप्रकाश का सराहनीय योगदान रहा है मेवाड़ की नई पुरानी सरहदों में स्थित प्राचीन चट्टानों पर उत्कीर्ण

पूर्व प्रस्तर युगीन आकारों को ढूंढ निकाला है।[1] इनके निर्माण में आदिमवासी की वही प्रवृत्ति दिखाई देती है जो विश्व के अन्य प्रस्तर युगीन कलाकार की जान पड़ती है।[2] इस प्रकार की कला का मूल स्रोत अभिव्यक्ति की आकांक्षा में निहित होता है।

आहड़–उत्खनन में प्राप्त २००० ई० पूर्व से ईसा की पहली सदी तक के पात्र–खण्डों में तरह तरह की आलेखन रचना दिखाई पड़ती है।[3] इनमें कुछ में दोहरी चोकड़ी का अलंकरण तो कहीं उंगलियों के उभरे निशान और कहीं लहरदार रेखाएं दौड़ती हुई दृष्टिगत होती हैं। इन रचनाओं में ज्यामिती का आधार लिया गया है। इतिहास बताता है कि कला में ज्यामिती व गणित का प्रयोग तत्कालीन समाज की बौद्धिक जागृति का द्योतक है। यह बात प्राचीन एवं नवीनतम दोनों ही कला के लिये सत्य नजर आती है। ग्रीक के मेसानियन काल के बर्तनों में व अन्य परवर्ती पात्र–खण्डों की तरहों में ज्यामिती का पूर्ण प्रयोग हुआ है। इसके बाद 'हेलेनिस्टिक' काल तक ज्यामिति व गणित ग्रीक की कला के मुख्य आधार बने रहे। मेसोपोटामिया सीरिया व मिस्र की आकृतियों के परोक्ष में भी ज्यामितीक गणना का महत्व हाथ है। २०वीं सदी की कला में तो यह प्रवृत्ति इतनी आगी कि आज की लगभग ५० प्रतिशत रचना इस पर आधारित है। अतएव आहड़ में हजारों वर्ष पूर्व प्रयुक्त ज्यामितिक आयतों से हम इस भूमि के बौद्धिक जागृति के स्तर को पहचान सकते हैं। राजस्थान की ग्रामीण कला का भी मूलाधार यही प्रवृत्ति रही है—सावन के मांडणे हाथों की मेंहदी व दीवार के 'मंडण' आदि इसके अच्छे खासा उदाहरण हैं। मेवाड़ की मध्यकालीन आकृतियों की कोणात्मकता के परोक्ष में रचना की भावना रही है जो कलाकार की बौद्धिक जागृति की प्रतीक है। खेद है कि अभी इस ओर उन विद्वानों का ध्यान नहीं गया जो इतिहास में केवल परिवर्तित रूपों की तिथियां ही खोज रहे हैं।

मध्यकालीन आकृतियों में ज्यामिति का काफी प्रयोग हुआ है। गुप्तकाल में यह प्रवृत्ति नहीं दिखाई देती। वहां आकृतियां गोल मांसल एवं लचाव की ओर झुकी हुई हैं जैसी कि बाघ व अजंता में दिखाई देती हैं। धीरे २ इनमें परिवर्तन होने लगा। एलोरा की आकृतियों में गोलाई व कोण का समन्वय हो गया। मुनि श्री जिनविजयजी ने जैसलमेर के ज्ञान-भंडारों

---

[1] बेड़च व गंभीर नदी तट पर की चट्टानों में उत्कीर्ण आकृतियां जिनका समय लगभग एक लाख वर्ष रहा होगा। इसी प्रकार भरतपुर के दर स्थान में गेरू से उंगलियों द्वारा अंकित मानवाकृतियां एवं चंबल के तट पर मोरी केशारेश्वर सिहुलगढ़ छबलाना व सीताबेड़ी आदि में प्रस्तर कालीन कई चित्रावशेष प्राप्त हुए हैं। ये स्थान प्राचीन समय में मेवाड़ की सीमा में रहे होंगे।

[2] जादू–टोने शिकार व दैनिक जीवन से संबंधित रचनाएं जिनके उद्भव में अभिव्यक्ति की अपेक्षा अधिक होती है। बनिस्पत किसी प्रकार के शिल्प कौशल दर्शाने की।

[3] इन के नमूने आहड़ संग्रहालय में देखने को मिल सकते हैं।

में से जैन शैली की आठ दस ऐसी शाखियाँ ढूंढ निकाली हैं जो राजस्थानी व अजंता-एलोरा के बीच की कड़ी जोड़ती हैं।[4] यहाँ कलाकार का ध्येय प्राकृतिक रूपों से हट कर निर्माणात्मक आकृतियों की खोज करना रहा है। यही वृत्ति राजस्थानी कलाकार की भी रही है। इस प्रकार की कला में अपभ्रंश होने का दोष लगाना अनुचित दिखाई देता है। खेद है कि ईसा की पहली शताब्दी से लेकर ११वीं शती तक कोई हमें ऐसे ठोस नमूने नहीं मिलते जो मेवाड़ के चित्र इतिहास को क्रमबद्धिक रूप दे सके। वर्णन अवश्य मिलता है जिसके आधार पर हम जानते हैं कि इस समय कलाकार मुंजभर शिल्प-कौशल के लिये एवं गुहिल राजा विलासप्रिय कला प्रियता के लिये प्रसिद्ध थे। शायद चित्र का धरातल पत्थर, दीवार या लकड़ी रहा होगा जो काल एवं राजनैतिक परिस्थितियों के कारण नष्ट भ्रष्ट हो गया हो।

११वीं से १५वीं शती तक कागज निर्माण होने के पूर्व अधिकतर चित्र ताड़पत्रों पर मिलते हैं। सचित्र पुस्तकों के लिये इनकी रचना हुई है। इस समय पश्चिमी भारत में एक निश्चित शैली के दर्शन होते हैं जिसको कुछ विद्वानों ने गुजराती, जैन अथवा अपभ्रंश कहा है। उत्तर में जौनपुर में भी यही शैली प्रचलित थी दक्षिण व मध्य प्रदेश में भी शैली समानता है। सल्तनती राज्यकालीन कला पर फारस का प्रभाव पड़ा है अतः इस समय देशव्यापी शैली में फारसी कला तत्वों का पाया जाना स्वाभाविक ही है। ग्यासुद्दीन खिलजी के लिये निर्मित नियामतनामा इसी प्रकार की पुस्तक है। विद्वानों का मत है कि इस शैली के निर्माण का मूल केन्द्र गुजरात रहा है। गुजरात व राजस्थान राजनैतिक दृष्टि से मध्यकाल में एक ही घेरे में थे अतः राजस्थान में भी इस शैली के दर्शन होजाना अस्वाभाविक नहीं है। जैसलमेर के ज्ञान भंडार व अन्य स्थलों पर इतनी सचित्र पुस्तकें प्राप्त हुई हैं कि उनका राजस्थान में निर्मित होना सत्य प्रतीत होता है। कागज निर्माण के बाद एवं व्यापारियों के पोषण के बाद तो इस प्रकार की सचित्र पुस्तकों की बाढ़ सी आगई। एक ही पुस्तक की कई २ प्रतियां प्राप्त हुई हैं जो उपर्युक्त कथन की पुष्टि करती हैं। आधुनिक शोध ने यह सिद्ध कर दिया है कि मेवाड़ भी मध्यकालीन शैली का मुख्य चित्र निर्माण स्थल रहा है। १२६० ई० का श्रावक प्रतिक्रमणचूर्णि नामक चित्रित ग्रंथ इसका पहला उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करता है। १४२३ के देलवाड़े में रचित* सुपासनाहचरियम ग्रंथ की आकृतियाँ गुजराती भी हैं। १२६६ ई० में उदयपुर के सरस्वती भंडार वाले कल्पसूत्र में भी इस शैली के दर्शन होते हैं। १३वीं शती तक इस शैली विधान का पूर्णरूपेण गठन हो चुका था जो आगामी २५० वर्ष तक निर्माण का लगातार आधार बनी रही। इस शैली की कुछ विशेषताएं जान लेना आवश्यक है जैसे तीन चौथाई चेहरे पक्षी जैसी लम्बी नाक कोड़ी सी फटी आंखें जिनमें एक आंख चेहरे की सीमा से बाहर अधर में लटकी हुई घुमावदार लम्बी अंगुलियां नटकदार सीमित (लाल पीला काला) रंग प्राकृतिक उपकरणों का पचारिक अलंकरणात्मक चित्रणीय विघटित

[4] देखिये मेरा लेख मुनि श्री हजारीमल ग्रन्थ तृतीय अध्याय पृष्ठ ६६४

* दिग्गज कल्याण मूर्ति ग्रंथ बम्बई १९२९ पृष्ठ संख्या १०६

कोणात्मक आकृतियाँ छाया व प्रकाश का पूर्ण बहिष्कार है विचारात्मक तथा नाटकीय संयोजन आदि आदि। इस शैली को अजंता से निरर्थक ही जोड़ने का मोह किया जा रहा है। वास्तव में इस शैली का अपना एक निजी स्वरूप है जिसके निर्माण में अजन्ता का उतना सम्पर्क नहीं दिखाई देता जितना फारस का। चित्र में लिखावट परम्परा भी अभारतीय है—फारस से आई जान पड़ती है। इन चित्रों के संयोजन व आकृति निर्माण में भी अजन्ता के यथार्थ 'टेकनिक' की अवहेलना की गई है। अजन्ता की रेखाएं घुमावदार लोच वाली व शारीरिक अवयवों के अनुरूप यथार्थ की ओर इंगित करती रखी गई हैं जब कि मध्यकालीन चित्र शैली की रेखाएं एक समान मोटाई की वेगमयी तीखी आकृतियों को चित्रित करती हुई अपना निजत्व उभारती हुई दिखाई देती हैं।[6] साहित्य के आधार पर आकृतियों में (प्राकृतिक रूपों से) विघटन किया गया है जैसे आदमी का वक्ष विशाल व कटि शेर के समान क्षीण बनाई गई है—नारियों की उभरी हुई गोल छातियां तीखी नाक व छोटी ठुड्डी। इमारतों के अंकन में स्थूलता बरती गई है। हाशिया का कम से कम प्रयोग किया गया है। कथात्मकता के लिये चित्रधरातल को अलग अलग तलों में बांट लिया गया है। समाज की आवश्यकता पूरी करने के लिये कलाकारों ने सरल से सरल व क्षिप्र तौर तरीके अपनाए होंगे जिससे इन चित्रों में और भी गति उत्पन्न हो गई है।

१६ वीं शती के अंत में इस शैली में परिवर्तन आने लगा।[7] यह समय राजस्थानी कला का उद्गम काल है। मेवाड़ इसका मुख्य केन्द्र था। अब धीरे धीरे चेहरे एक चश्म होने लगे फटी २ आँखें मीनाक्षि हो गईं। अधर में लटकी आंख लुप्त हो गई रंगों में विभिन्नता आ गई। एनाटामी का परित्याग किया गया आकृतियों का भावात्मक आधार पर रूपान्तरण किया गया। मुद्राओं में गति आ गई अंगुलियां लचीली बादाम हो गई और आंखें मस्त सी फड़कने लगीं। इन चित्रों में पेड़ पौधों का आलेखन अलंकरण स्वरूप हुआ है। आम व ताड़ के वृक्ष परम्परागत ढंग के हैं। जानवर व पक्षियों की आकृतियां अयथार्थ बनाई गई हैं। आदमी की वेशभूषा में टखने तक धोती कंधे पर उत्तरीय बाद में पारदर्शक चकदार जामा भिन्ना पायजामा कुल्हेदार टोपी अथवा अटपटी पगड़ी दिखाई देती है। औरतें घाघरा बारीक कसकदार ओढ़नी जाली के ऊपर तक चली गई जिसकी चोली कर्णफूल गले में हार हाथों में चूड़ियां भुजबन्ध से लटकते फुंदे व चोटियों में गुंथे मोती व फूल मालायें आदि पहने हुए चित्रित की गई हैं। नदी जल लहरदार रेखाओं की आकृति द्वारा बनाई गई है जिनमें कहीं कहीं मछलियां या कमल तैरते हुए दिखाये गये हैं। लाल रंग की पृष्ठिका में नीले पीले हरे व काले रंग की रूपाकृतियां उभारी गई हैं। बादल

---

[6] रेखा रंग व आकृति चित्रकला के मूल तत्व हैं अतः चित्र के सौंदर्य के लिये इन तत्वों का स्वतंत्र अस्तित्व अपेक्षणीय है। अजंता में रेखाएं आकृति आश्रित हैं जबकि मध्यकालीन चित्रों की रेखाएं अपना अस्तित्व अलग बनाये हुए हैं। इस कारण इनका मूल्य अजंता से दो कदम आगे है।

[7] पढ़िये मेरा लेख —शोध पत्रिका, जनवरी अप्रैल १९६९ संयुक्तांक।

गोलाकार बनाये गये हैं—कहीं कहीं मौन का प्रयास भी हुआ है जो फारसी प्रभाव के कारण आया है। सारा चित्र जीवन से ओत प्रोत दिखाई देता है। १६वीं शती की प्रथमार्द्ध में रचित श्री एम० सी० मेहता संग्रह की चौरपंचाशिका मेवाड़ की पारिवारिक—कार्य न शैली का आदर्श नमूना लिया जा सकता है।

१७वीं शती में अत्यधिक राजनैतिक उथल पुथल के बावजूद भी मेवाड़ की अपनी शैली बन चुकी थी जिससे राजस्थानी कला की उत्पत्ति हुई है। श्री कनोड़िया का रागमाला सेट १६०५ ई० में चावंड में रचा गया था। इसमें अत्यन्त चटकदार रंगों का प्रयोग हुआ है। इसकी कोणनुमा आकृतियाँ गुर्जर शैली की याद दिलाती हैं। १६०५ से १६२२ तक मेवाड़ चित्रकला का उत्कर्ष काल रहा है। १६४० के लगभग के नेशनल-संग्रहालय के नायक नायिका भेद के चित्र इस समय के श्रेष्ठ उदाहरण हैं। १७वीं शती के अंत में मुगल कला के अधिक सम्पर्क के कारण मेवाड़ चित्रों की उत्तेजना में कमनीयता आगई है। जगतसिंह काल के (१६२८–१६५२) चित्र मेवाड़ के शिल्प-कौशल के उत्कृष्ट प्रमाण हैं।

मध्यकाल में सारे भारत में सांस्कृतिक चेतना आने लगी थी। जयदेव विद्यापति चण्डीदास सूर तुलसी मीरा कबीर नानक मतिराम देव बिहारी आदि के काव्य से जन-जीवन में भक्ति व प्रेम की धारा बहादी थी। इस काल के चित्र इन भावनाओं के बिंब हैं। राधा-कृष्ण चित्र के केन्द्र बिंदु बन गये। भागवत् की कई २ प्रतियाँ रची गईं। मेवाड़ की १६४८ की साहबदी द्वारा रची गई भागवत् की अन्य प्रतियाँ सरस्वती भंडार कोटा व जोधपुर संग्रहालय में हैं। कुछ पृष्ठ व छिन्न चित्र नेशनल म्यूजियम दिल्ली में हैं। रामायण भी मेवाड़ का प्रिय विषय रहा है। १६४९ की मनोहर की चित्रित रामायण की प्रति प्रिंस ऑफ म्यूजियम बंबई में है। इसकी रचना चित्तौड़ में हुई थी। इसी प्रकार की एक प्रति जो १६५१ की है इस समय सरस्वती भंडार उदयपुर में है। नेशनल म्यूजियम की जगनिवास रागमाला इस काल की महत्वपूर्ण कृति है। केशव की रसिक प्रिया जिसमें नायक-नायिका की मानसिक अवस्थाओं का मार्मिक अंकन किया गया है मेवाड़ ही नहीं सारे राजस्थान का आकर्षक विषय रहा है। बीकानेर की रसिक प्रिया का रचना स्थल मेवाड़ ही रहा है।* गीत गोविंद पर भी मेवाड़ में चित्र रचे गये? १६५ की गीत गोविंद की प्रति इस समय प्रिंस ऑफ वेल्स म्यूजियम बंबई में है। सूर सागर के कुछ चित्र कनोड़िया संग्रह में हैं। जगतसिंह काल की विशेषताएं हैं काले जोगिया पीले लाल व लाजवर्द* रंगों का चटकदार प्रयोग समतल एकरंगीय पृष्ठिका में विविध विरोधात्मक रंगों से उभरती व्याकृतियां औरतें और आदमियों की भारी नाक अंडाकार चेहरे, मछली की तड़पती आँखें ठिगनी औरतें मोहक मानव स्थितियाँ (poses) बोलती मुद्राएं अलंकरणात्मक पेड़ पौधे जिनमें बाद में अकबर-जहाँगीर की

* १७वीं शताब्दी की रचना है।

* यह एक प्रकार का नीला रंग है जो फारस से भारत आया है।

यथार्थता का आरोप, पहाड़ियों व चट्टानें मुगलों सी दृश्यों की अवहेलना चित्र तल का कथात्मकता के अनुरूप विभाजन, मुख्य आकृति पर केन्द्रीयता अन्य आकृतियों का गौण तलों में स्थापन, प्रकृति के संयोजन में नाटकीयता चिड़िया व जानवर चीन शैली से घोड़े व हाथी शाहजहाँ–कालनुमा रात्रि का चित्रण गहरी कालिमामई पृष्ठभूमि पर चांद तारे दर्शाकर औरतों व आदमियों की शक्लों में परदाज द्वारा छाया का प्रयोग जैसा अकबर–जहाँगीर काल में हुआ है आदमी का ज्यामितिक पैटर्न से असंबद्ध सादा गोल घेरदार जामा औरतों के फूल बूटों से सज्जित छींट के लहंगे कसी हुई छोटी चोलियां पारदर्शक चिपकी ओढ़नियां झूमते बाजूबंद, अकबर–जहाँगीर काल सी गुम्बदनुमा इमारतें आदि–आदि ।

राधा कृष्ण सम्बन्धित चित्रों में एक धर्म विशेष की शृंगारिकता अवश्य झलकती है पर उनमें तत्कालीन समाज के दर्शन नहीं होते । परन्तु भागवत् पुराण व रामायण में कलाकार को निरूपण का विस्तृत क्षेत्र मिल सका है । फलस्वरूप इनमें राजपूतों के रीति–रिवाज की सही झांकियां दिखाई देती हैं । ग्रामीण जीवन, दरबारी दृश्य, सवारी शादी के दृश्य नृत्य-गान महलों व लड़ाई आदि के दृश्यों में राजस्थान बखूबी झलकता है । पोर्ट्रेट (व्यक्ति-चित्रण) की इस काल में अत्यन्त कमी दिखाई देती है । मुगलों जैसा इन चित्रों में शिल्प कौशल भी नहीं बन पड़ा पर कलात्मक आलेखन व रचनात्मक प्रक्रिया में ये मुगलों से दो कदम आगे हैं । चटकदार रंग रचनामूलक आकृतियां व दृश्यों का सृजनात्मक आलेखन एक अपना अलग ही सौंदर्य रखता है । मुगल कला में दरबारी तड़क भड़क है जब कि मेवाड़ी चित्रों में जन-जीवन के हृदय की धड़कन सुनाई देती है । मेवाड़ की कला हाकिम-हुक्कामों से लेकर जन साधारण तक की कला है ।

१६२२–१६६८ तक (जगतसिंह की मृत्युपरान्त) कला में कोई अन्तर नहीं आया । राजसिंह के समय में कला को कोई पोषण नहीं मिल पाया । १७ वीं शती के अंत में मेवाड़ की गरिमामई शैली की सांझ आगई ।

१७ वीं शती के बाद चित्रों की तो बाढ़ आगई पर सौंदर्य महिमा घटने लगी । व्यक्ति-चित्र दरबारी दृश्य हरम की झांकियां, सवारी व शिकार के नजारे अब मेवाड़ कलम के विषय रह गये । घोड़ों, हाथियों और कुत्तों तक के हूबहू चित्रण होने लगे जिनमें मुगल एवं यूरोपीय कला का प्रभाव छाता गया । भक्त रत्नावली दुर्गा महात्मा पृथ्वीराज रासो आदि की बड़ी सचित्र प्रतियां रची गईं । बारह मासा राग रागनियां व नायक नायिका भेद पर कई चित्र बने पर अब उनमें ओज व रंगों की चमक जाती रही । १८ वीं व १९ वीं शती की रचना में तूलिका कौशल अधिक व कलात्मक सौंदर्य क्षीण होगया जो इसकी मृत्यु की घोषणा कर रहा है ।

आधुनिक युग में मेवाड़ में कुछ कलाकार सृजनात्मक कार्य कर रहे हैं जिनमें इन पंक्तियों के लेखक श्री गोवर्धनलाल जोशी एवं श्री एल एल अमीन आदि अग्रणी हैं । यह तो भविष्य ही बताएगा कि कला-समाज में उनकी क्या देन होगी ।

परमानन्द चोयल

forts of mewar

Mewar the heroic land of Rajput chivalry has a number of forts The history of these is full of romantic deeds. Among these Chitor Mandalgarh and Kumbhalgarh are very famous

The fort of Chitor is in fact, a standing monument of the Rajput heroism and sacrifice for freedom It is situated 67 miles away from Udaipur

The recent archaeological researches have gone to show that the bank of the river Gambhiri over which the celebrated fort of Chitor stands had been the abode of the early man of Rajasthan. During Epic period Nagari the place 7 miles away from Chitor had been a seat of learning Nagari was also invaded by the Greek invador Demetruis

History

It is very difficult to ascertain the exact date when this fort was originally built. According to the traditions prevailing in the area Pandavas visited Chitor and Bhim constructed some parts of the fort. But the existing construction was completed by Maurya king Chitranganda in order to check the inroads of Huns Mers etc. Bappa Rawal was the first Gahlot ruler who acquired the fort from Mauryas. During the reign of Khuman I it was invaded by the Rastrakuta King Govind II and the same was occupied by some king Dharni Varaha for some time Later on Gahlots of Mewar regained it. For some years it also remained under the suzerainty of the parmars of Malwa Chalukyas of Gujrat and Sonagaras of Jalore. The brave Gahlot rulers like Jetra Singh, Tej Singh and

Samar Singh successfully resisted the various invasions. During this time Chitor became a capital and centre of art learning etc

During the reign of Raatn Singh the successor of Samar Singh Sultan Alauddin Khilji invaded Chitor Rajputs resisted but were defeated Several women flung into the fire and conducted Johar Sultan conquered and occupied the fort and ravaged the country by plundering it and massacring the people During Tughlaq period it remained under Malik Asaduddin. Hamir regained it about V S. 1382.

Maharana Hamir s possession of Chitor is, in fact, a beginning of new epoch in the history of Mewar Thereafter a galaxy of powerful rulers emerge in the history of Mewar as Maharana Kheta, Kumbha Raimal and Sanga who are found waging successful wars against the Sultans of Malwa and Gujrat. Bahadur Shah of Gujrat invaded Chitor in V S 1592 during the reign of Maharana Vikramaditya when Mewar was engulfed in civil war and disorder Once again the Rajput ladies flung into the holy fire and conducted Johar Bahadur Shah could not retain it long, as he was soon defeated by Humayun

The third and the last invasion of Chitor took place during the reign of Maharana Udai Singh. Sensing the impending defeat, the Rajput ladies again committed Johar the third saka of chitor and the entire garrison of Rajputs fell fighting. The fort was returned to Manarana Amar Singh after the Mughal Mewar alliance This event marks the eclipse of strategio and political impor tance of Chitor as the capital of Mewar was now transferred to Udaipur city founded by Maharana Udai Singh in the thick part of the Arravalis.

Architecture

While going to the fort the first object of the historical interest is a massive old bridge of grey limestone built across the river Gambhiri It is nearly 450 ft. long and 30 ft. broad having1 0 arches. There are numerous inscribed stones of 13th century available, which were removed from the fort. Among these the inscription of Queen Jayatal Devi, mother of Samar Singh inscriptions of V S 1303 1324 and of pertaining to Jain Manibandha and Chakrabandha are worth quoting

There is an old temple of Shankargatta containing an inscription of V S. 770

While going to the fort, the chabutara of Rawat Bagha and cenotaphs of Jaymal and Kalla which were constructed to commemorate their heroic deeds

draw our attention to the ancient history of the fort. Ram Pole the main entrance of the fort is a beautiful gateway decorated with several images. Outside this gate there are 10 inscriptions ranging from V. S 1593 to 1835. Besides one inscription of V S. 1538 inscribed on a pillar I also available in a hall situated in the front of this gate

Inside Ram pole there is a Patta's memorial cenotaph. From this place a road goes to south. On this road a temple of Tulza Bhawani containing a small shrine and a pillered mandapa constructed by Maharana Banvir is situated

while going further south the main objects of historical interest are Shringar Chawari Pataleshwar temple and Digambar Jain temple The Pataleshwar temple facing west cantains 3 shrines and a common corridor in front of them, supporting on 4 rows of pillars. It has an inscription of V.S 1622

The Shringar Chawari is one of the beautiful temples of not only Mewar but Northern India. It was originally constructed before V S 1358 as a fragmentary inscription is available on it. It was repaired during the reign of Maharana Kumbha by Bhandar and other icons of the temple were consecrated in theyears 1512 and 1513. This was a Kharatargachha Jain temple on the outside walls. Various scenes of Gods and Goddess etc. are deeply and beautifully carved. Originally there was a Ashta pada arrangement having 24 images seated in different numbers on an elevated square platform. The gates are fine specimen of deeply carved tracery work

In the wall of Banvir there are 3 inscriptions two are dated V S 1834 and the third is of 15th century. The temple almost touching shringar Chawari facing east is a small shrine of Digambar Jain sect. It was having an image of V S 1232 which has now been removed

In front of the wall of Banvir the remnants of the palace of Maharana Kumbha are visible. It seems that these were constructed originally in the 13th century which is apparent from the style of the carving and construction of pillars but the immense additions and alterations were made by Kumbha. It is a matter of great interest that the king who had constructed a beautiful kirti Stambha and had patronised the great Ranakpur temple showed little care for his own residential matter. This palace has got a domestic style of Rajput architecture having Tripolia Audience Hall Ganesh Temple seperate Zenana and heir—apparent palaces. According to Mandan a famous architect of Kumhba there was a good dancing hall available in the palace which was also used during

Hindu Gods and Goddesses as the names have also been inscribed at the foot of each. The chief architects who built this were Jeta and his sons There are several fragmentary inscriptions from V S 1499 to 1516 available on various storeys of this offering obeisance to lord Samadhi shwar etc

Another fine specimen of temple architecture is a temple of Mokal or Samadhishwar It was constructed in 12th century It consists of a shrine a mandap and 3 porticos In the main shrine there is a colossal image of Tri murti It is full of deeply carved tracery even better than the temple con structed during Kumbhads time In Narthar there are some reliefs containing Jain scenes Besides there are sculptures of some Jain Goddesses in it. There-fore some scholars have opined that it is a Jain temple but it seems to be baseless view because in Jain temples like Shringar chawari Mahaveer temple of Chitor we can see a number of Hindu sculptures

It consists of few inscriptions. On the walls of mandap there are two inscri ptions of V S 1286 Similarly in the western wall of the Mandap there are two inscriptions of V S 1207 and 1486 inscribed on the black stones of the time of Kumarpal Chalukya and Maharana Mokal respectively An inscription of V S 1358 now available in Udaipur Museum, contains the account of the repairing of this temple.

In the northern part of this temple there is a group of small temples and gate of Mahasati One broken temple lying in the eastern side of Kirti Stambha containing an inscription of V S 1327 was demolished during the time of some johar Similarly there is an inscription of V S 1331 in the gate Mahasati containing a detailed but incorrect genealogy of the rulers of Mewar composed by Veda sharman

The original name of gomukh situated on the southern side of Mokal s temple was Mandakini It was originally constructed in the 9th or 10th century as is apparent from the remnants of pillars. In the cave situated above it there are 2 inscriptions one of V S 1516 and other of V S 1643 both are connected with Jainism

After passing through the houses of Patta and Jaimal the temple of *Kali kamata* one of the important historical objects is visible *Originally* it was a dedicated to Surya Deva who has also been displayed riding on horses. This is also one of the best specimen of early style of ornamentation. It is full of deeply carved traceries.

From this temple the modernised palaces of Padmini are visible These

were renewed and repaired in the 18th century Other objects of the historical interest are Adbhuta temple Nilkantha temple Jain Vijaya Stambha. Mahavir Jain Temple and Kukadeshwar group of temples Adbhuta temple was constru cted during the reign of Maharana Raimal Nilkantha temple was one of the oldest temples, which was demolished during the Invasion of Alauddin Khilji. Jain Vijaya Stambha was completed during the reign of Maharana Hamir Kukade shwar group of temples are also old temples but artistically not very fine In this way this fort is a standing monument of art and architecture.

Cultural centre

Chitor remained a centre of art and learning from the earliest times Sidhasena Diwakar Haribhadra suri Jin Vallabh Suri, Elacharya Harisena etc. are the earliest Jain scholars who flourished here Mahuka was one of the descendants of the great poet, Maghe who settled at Chitor Sutradhar Mandan, one of the writers of 15th century was patronised by Kumbha Mirabai also flourished here

Kumbhalgarh

Kumbhalgarh is situated about 60 miles from Udaipur It had been one of the invincible forts of Mewar

History

It is known from Jain traditions that king Samprati Maurya constructed some temples on the site where the present fort of Kumbhalgarh stands. Although the present fort was constructed by Kumbha but there existed an ancient citadel the name of which was Mahor or Machhindarpur It was necessary for the protection of Godawar (which was under Mewar at that time to have a strong hold there Maharana Kumbha on the plan of the architect Mandan constructed it. Several times the Sultans of Malwa and Gujrat, vainly attacked it, during that time It was however captured by Akbar in V S 1634-35 but was soon after taken back by Pratap Thereafter except during the civil war pertaining to Ratan Singh It always remained an abode of peace

Architecture

This fort is defended by the series of ramparts with battlements and bastions built upon the slopes of the hill upon which the enemy could not be able to scale even by the means of ladders. Hence it has a strategical Impor tance While going from Kelwara the first object of historical interest visible is

Hanuman pole where Maharana Kumbha Installed the image of Hanuman brought from Mandor

In the fort the Yajnavedi Mamadeva s temple Samavasharan s temple Neelkantha temple etc. ae worth seeing. Yajnavedi is a 3 storeyed building constructed when the consecration of the fort was performed by Kumbha It has got architectural merits. Its each tier is decorated with numerous massive low columns resting on a sculptured panneled parapet

Mamadeva s temple was according to scholars, formerly a chomukha Jain temple Maharana Kumbha simply renovated it and built a large reservoir of water Numerous inscribed images of various Gods and Goddeses were found from this place. Besides two large inscriptions one [of 5 slabs and other of 2 slabs of V S 1517 were found here Kumbha was treacherously stabbed by his son Uda here at the edge of the said Kunda

The Jain temple known as Peetaliya Deva contains very attractive images of Agni Brahma Indra Yama Varuna Vayu Kuber eto It has an inscription of V S. 1512. Another important Jain temple known as Bawan Jinalaya has nearly 40 Deva Kulikas. It has an Inscription of V S 1521 The Badal Mahal. Tara Burja Top Khana Navachoki palaces etc. are also Worth seeing The fine panoramic view of the wild and rugged scenery of hills are also visible from here

Mandalgarh

Mandalgarh is an important key fort of the Eastern table land of Mewar Its history is chequerred one Originally it was constructed by Nikumbha Rajputs. Later on it was taken by the Chauhans of Ajmer Hadas of Bundi and Guhilots of Mewar For long it remained under the jagir of Balanota Solankis. who rebuilt it. This fort was invaded by various Muslim. Sultans, According to Shringirishi Inscription. Alauddin Khilji made an unsuccessful attempt to get it. During the reign of Maharana Kumbha it was invaded several times by the rulers of Malwa. For Some time Mahmud Khilji. the Sultan of Malwa was successful in getting it In his possession. He demolished several temples. Therefore there are no earlier Inscriptions now available. AKbar annexed it in his empire which was subsequently returned to the rulers of Mewar at the time of Treaty In the reign of Aurangzeb it was taken by him in lieu of Jazya. The Emperor granted it to Rathor Chief of pisangana namely Duda. Maharana Amar Singh expelled the Rathors. The Mughal Emperor

during the reign of Maharana Sangram Singh II donated it to Indra Singh of Nagaur but he declined to accept it.

Architecture

The following places and inscriptions are the objects of historical study —

1 Gupteshwar temple consists of inscriptions of V s. 1559 and V S 1571 of the time of Maharana Raimal and Meharana Sanga respectively These records consists the of account of the construction of a Matha

2 Jaleshwar temple consists of two inscriptions of V S 1617 and 1651 of some Solanki chiefs. During these years the temple was repaired.

3 Jain temple Rikhabdeva was completed in V S. 1718. A fragmentary inscription of the said year consisting of the name of architect Deva is available.

4 Two Surah Lekhas of the time of Maharana Bhim Singh contain the account a marble of the prohibition of the slaughter of animals for religious purposes.

Col. Tod has referred about two big inscriptions which he collected from Bewadi containing the pedigree of Solankis which are now untraceable.

In this way in shaping the hisrory of Mewar these forts have played an important part.

R. V Somani

mewar and the marathas

The earliest opportunity for Mewar Maratha relationship presented itself when Prince Akbar after his abortive revolt against his father Aurangzeb fled to Deccan from Rajputana under the Rajput escort led by Durgadas. The efforts for Rajput—Maratha alliance against the Mughals did not succeed however By the beginning of the 18th century the Maratha bands began appearing on the political scene of the northern India. Henceforth Rajputana remained for about a century an easy and unobstructive field of their ravaging operations.

The very first contacts of the Marathas with Mewar and other Rajput States were marked by the Maratha depradations in this territory and levying of unbearable tribute by the former The Marathas became a menance to Mewar as early as 1724 A. D as evidenced by a KHARITA dated 24th November 1724 sent by Maharana Sangram Singh of Udaipur to Sawai Jai Singh of Amber (Jaipur) The Maharana wrote that the Deccanis ware causing disturbances in his territory and that he considered them to be thieves needing proper chastisement. Since the Maratha depredations continued a defensive alliance was made by the three Rajput States—Mewar Amber and Kota against the Marathas. But several facters, e g their traditional rivalry motives of self aggrandisement and narrow outlook prevented them to comprehend the Maratha menace objectively and take the defensive alliance seriously

In the mean—time the Marathas continued to increase their hold over Malwa. This hold became almost complete by defeating Mughal

Governor Sawai Jai Singh in the battle of Mandsaur (Feb. 1733) This created a very serious situation for the States of Rajasthan compelling Rajput princes to take prompt action The Rajputs resorted to what is known as the policy of DAM and SAM (money and conciliation) First money was used to persuade them to evacuate the occupied territory of Malwa. A promise of five-lakhs of rupees was made by Dhabhai Nagjar on February 27 1733 and the same was paid by May in full, the Marathas did not evacuate Malwa. Thus the attempt of the Rajput rulers misfired and money could not secure the desired results. On the other hand, the Bundi affair invited and prompted the Marathas to enter into Rajasthan itself

Bundi affair and Hurda conference

In 1734 A. D Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur in order to enhance his influence expelled Budh Singh from Bundi and placed his own son in law Dalel Singh on the throne This gross interference in the internal affairs of Bundi State gave rise to a complicated situation and the dethroned family sought the support of external power i e the Marathas Pratap Singh Hada the elder brother of Dalel Singh was sent to Poona to meet the Peshwa and other prominent Sardars for enlisting their military support for Budh Singh. The assistance was given and on 23rd April 1734 Holkar restored the autho ity of Budh Singh over Bundi

It was thus the first direct Maratha interference in the domestic affairs of a State in Rajasthan It greatly alarmed the Rajputs. Thinking minds in Rajasthan began to apprehend danger from the Marathas against the safety of their own States. They now realized that they could not survive with honour without pooling their efforts against a common danger In order to decide their future course of action a conference of the Rajput rulers was called at Hurda. It was attended by almost all the important rulers of Rajasthan. This conference was presided over by Maharana Jagat Singh of Mewar Deliberations at the conference resulted into the treaty of 17thJuly 1734 having a plan to oust the Marathas from Malwa.

Thus for the first time since the battle of Khanua in 1527 a Rajput confederacy was again formedunder the leadership of Jagat Singh the Maharana of Mewar But this unity remained only on paper It could not be put into practice because every Rajput ruler had his own personal ambitions and none was willing to give them up for anything vitally essential for the common cause. The Maharana was a man of luxurious habits incapable of assuming the command of the united forces. Moreover internal dissension did not allow him to concentrate his attention on resistance and the Rajput rulers could not

accept any other ruler as their leader. So they neither re-assembled at Rampura nor took the field against the Marathas after the rains as was decided. The Rajputs thus lost a rare opportunity of thwarting the Maratha incursions in Rajasthan.

The Hurda conference produced highly disastrous results for Mewar because the Maharana who had so far posed as a friend of the Marathas came out in open heading a conference which contemplated united military action against them. The subsequent period witnessed the furious Marathas entering into Mewar imposing unbearable demands on the Rana and resorting to ravaging operations.

Bajirao's visit to Udaipur

The matters came to a head when Bajirao came to Rajasthan with a 'magic bag' of diplomacy to persuade the rulers of various States to come to a political settlement with him. The first major State which he approached was Mewar. Accompanied by Sindhia, Holkar and Anand Rao Panwar he reached Udaipur in the first week of February 1736. He was accorded a very warm reception and was encamped at Champabag near Anar. The immediate object of his visit was to secure a 'Sanad' from the Rana acknowledging his right to receive 'Chauth' for which his agent Sada Shiva Ballal was trying for about a year. His efforts brought about a settlement by which Mewar agreed to pay a sum of Rs. 12,25,000/— in eight years commencing from the year 1736 to 1742-43 and set apart the revenue of the Pargana of Banera for the above payment.

From Udaipur Bajirao proceeded towards Jaipur to meet Sawai Jai Singh. On the way he visited Nathdwara where he and his wife had 'darshan' of the Deity. They reached Bhanbhole near Kishangarh where on the 8th March a meeting between him and Sawai Jai Singh took place. Bajirao's visit to Rajputana and especially to Mewar had very far reaching political repercussions. Bajirao's visit completely exposed the vulnerability of the Rajput states.

Struggle for Jaipur throne

Though Bajirao had adopted harsher posture in imposing exacting terms on the Rana yet he maintained friendly relations with the latter. On hearing the news of Nadirshah's invasion of Delhi he appealed to the Maharana for a joint action against the invader. But Maharana was busy in trying to get the Jaipur throne to his nephew Madho Singh, after the death of Jai Singh who had grown too weak and senile and was not likely to survive long.

Madho Singh was the younger son of Sawai Jai Singh born to the princess of Mewar who was given in marriage to him in 1708 on an express condition that the son born to her would succeed Jai Singh even if he were younger in age However on the death of Jai Singh his elder son Ishwari Singh succeeded to the gadi of Jaipur Madho Singh pressed his claim to the throne and his cause was naturally supported by the Maharana of Mewar He secured help of the Marathas to further the cause of Madho Singh The struggle between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh became one of the major causes which disturbed the peace in Rajasthan for the next eight years Ultimately in 1751 Madho Singh succeeded in securing the throne For its price he gave parganas of Tonk and Malpura besides the pargana of Rampura (which actually belonged to Mewar) and a large amount of money to the Marathas.

Madho Singh s affair resulted not only in loss of men and money to Mewar but it had ruinous effects on the internal administration and political stability of the State also The nobility of Mewar got split and restive on account of the weakness of the Rana and took to defiance and disorderly actiity On the other hand the Maratha agents at Udaipur however went on pressing for the payment of tribute Not only Mewar but other States of Rajasthan also smarted under tortuous pressure of the Marathas. However individually they were powerless to resist the Maratha demands Durjan Sal of Kota and Madho Singh of Jaipur took the initiative in organising the united front of the Rajput rulers against the Marathas While the talks for an anti Maratha coalition were going on Maharana Jagat Singh died on the 8th June 1751 His death was a great blow to this cause However the rulers continued their further plans against the Marathas and tried to persuade Pratap Singh II the new Maharana to join the coalition But these consultations proved of no avail as the internal disturbances of Mewar demanded all the attention of the Maharana After only three years of reign Pratap Singh died on 10th January 1754 and was succeeded by his ten years old son Raj Singh.

Maratha raids into Mewar

The short reign of Maharana Raj Singh II was marked by many Maratha invasions In the beginning of year 1755 A. D Malhar Rao Holkar and Raghunath came to Mewar In the same year Vithal Rao also ravaged Mewar and Sadashiv Rao Govind Rao and Kanhaji Jadhav levied war contributions. Raghunath Rao and Holkar again came into Mewar territory early in the year 1757 and took ransom of one Lakh or rupees from Javad. The period between 1755 and 1758 proved highly disastrous for Mewar The Maharana had no other

alternative but to buy off the Maratha Sardars. The next three years from 1759 to 1761 Mewar was slightly relieved of the Maratha pressure because their attention was considerably diverted on account of Abdali's invasions.

Battle of Panipat and its effects on Rajasthan

The third battle of Panipat took place on January 14, 1761 in which Afghans inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Marathas led by Sadashiv Bhau. In Rajasthan reaction of the Maratha defeat was that of rejoicing. The Rajput princes stopped payment of tributes. Sawai Madho Singh initiated a move and tried his best to form an anti Maratha league. But again the old jealousies and prejudices blocked the path of unity. When united action could not be undertaken Mewar and other Rajput States made stray individual attempts to dislodge the Marathas from their previous position. In the meantime the seven teen year old Maharana Raj Singh died on the 3rd April 1761. Being issueless, he was succeeded to the throne by his uncle Ari Singh better known as Maharana Arsi. His succession was the signal for successive civil strifes in the country.

Civil war in Mewar and the Marathas

Maharana Arsi, being ill tempered by nature incurred displeasure of a number of nobles, who decided to dethrone him. In the meantime posthumous son was born to the late Maharana Raj Singh II and he was placed under the charge of Jaswant Singh, the maternal uncle of the child. The news of the birth of the prince came like a bolt from the blue to Rana Arsi. He resorted to the policy of suppression. This further exasperated a number of nobles who openly preached revolt. In order to dethrone Arsi they proclaimed Ratan Singh, the posthumous prince as the Maharana of Mewar in 1764 at Kumbhalgarh. In this manner the Civil war began. Jaswant Singh of Deogarh was the leader of the rebel group. He was joined by the feudal chiefs of Sadri, Delwara, Begun, Kothana and Bhindar. On the other hand Maharana Arsi won over the Raja of Shahpura. He also gained an unexpected ally Jhala Zalim Singh of kota.

Similarly attempts to seek the help of the Marathas were made by both Arsi and Ratan Singh. The rebel group succeeded in gaining the support of Yashwant Rao Bable and Sadashiv Gangadhar by the promise of three lakhs of rupees. Simultaneaously Yashwant Rao Bable also wrote to the Peshwa advising him to espouse the cause of Ratan Singh for an amount of rupees thirty six lakhs. Besides the Marathas the Jodhpur ruler Vijay Singh also came forward to extend his support to Rantan Singh for the *promise of fifteen lakhs*

In the meantime Maharana Arsi was busy contacting several other Maratha Sardars and ultimately succeeded in gaining the support of Mian Daula. He also won over Baharji Takpar and Raghoram to his side. This created a dangerous situation for the supporters of Ratan Singh so they took the young prince to Mahadji's camp at Ujjain. In the shrine of Mahakaleshwar an agreement was reached according to which Sindhia was to be paid thirty lakhs of rupees if he succeeded in securing the throne of Mewar for Ratan Singh. These alarming developments naturally perturbed Rana Arsi. He made serious efforts to dissuade Sindhia against championing the cause of his adversary but failed to win him over to his side. Consequently a battle was fought on 13th January 1769 on the banks of the river Sipra in which Arsi's forces were completely routed.

Sindhia besieges Udaipur

Some weeks after the battle of Sipra Sindhia in March, 1769 marched against Udaipur. This march created great panic in the Capital. At this hour of need the ex minister Amarchand was urged to return and direct defence preparations. He accepted the offer and hurriedly organised the defence of the Capital. Mahadji besieged the city of Udaipur in the second week of April. The siege dragged on for more than four months without any result. The spirit of determination which prevailed among the besieged disquietened Sindhia. He thought it prudent to end the hostilities. Hence peace negotiations were started and an agreement was arrived at by which Mewar agreed to pay sixty three and a half lakhs of rupees to Sindhia. After this agreement Sindhia left Mewar.

Battle between the rival parties and the attitude of the Marathas

But the settlement with Sindhia established no peace in Mewar. Ratan Singh was still at Kumbhalgarh and the refractory nobles continued to support him. They were also receiving support of Sawai Prithvi Singh the successor of Sawai Madho Singh of Jaipur. The Peshwa did not view with favour the military aid provided by Jaipur and reproached Prithvi Singh strongly for his unbecoming action. But he continued to support the cause of rebels in Mewar and secured the support of General Samru for them. However the successive victories of Arsi over Ratan Singh crippled the strength of his rival and he emerged stronger. But Arsi was not lucky enough to enjoy respite after the cessation of the hostilities. He was murdered by Ajit Singh of Bundi on 9th March, 1773. He was succeeded by his nine year old son Hamir Singh, during whose reign the parganas of Singoli, Bhichore, Jat., Kheri etc. were given away to the Marathas. After the short reign of nearly five years Maharana Hamir Singh died on 6th June, 1778.

Anti Maratha move in Rajasthan and the battle of Tunga

Once again Mewar had a young Maharana when Bhim Singh (younger brother of Hamir Singh) ascended the gaddi. During the early years of his reign he got respite for some time from the Maratha attacks as the later were busy in the Anglo-Maratha war. Mewar utilized this time in forging unity among hostile groups of nobility specially Chundawats and Shaktawats. This phase of unity was, however too short lived to give any substantial advantage to the State. The old rivalries between the Chundawats and Shaktawats again broke out. Meanwhile the Anglo Maratha war came to an end and Mahadji emerged more powerful than before. The Mughal Emperor after the death of Mirza Najaf Khan appointed him Vakil i Mutlaq. As he grew stronger his interference in Rajasthan also increased considerably. The rulers of these States particularly of Mewar Marwar and Jaipur therefore tried to form a common front against the Marathas. Daulatram Haldia an ex Diwan of Jaipur was sent to Lucknow to hire an English brigade against the Marathas. Owing to the declared non interference policy of the then Governor General, he did not succeed in his mission. But Jaipur and Marwar formed a defensive alliance and payment of tribute to the Marathas was stopped. when Mahadji himself marched against Jaipur with a large force to realise it, urgent orders were sent by the ruler to the chiefs to assemble at Jaipur with their contingents and Kharitas were sent to Jodhpur Bikaner Bundi and other States to send their forces to fight against the Marathas. At the same time arrangements were made to destroy the Maratha out posts in Mewar while they were engaged with the Rajputs at Jaipur. Mahadji s attack on Jaipur was no longer the concern of Jaipur alone. Practically the whole of Rajasthan was with her. After the skirmishes for several days the battle of Tunga was fought on 28th July 1787 in which the Rajputs emerged victorious.

The defeat and susequent retreat of Mahadji created a stir and gave great impetus to the anti Maratha movements in Rajasthan. In Mewar an army of about ten thousands was sent to destroy the Maratha out-posts. They captured Nimbahera, Nakump Jiran and Javad but the ground regained was soon lost when the Maratha forces under the leadership of Ambaji Inglia and Shiva Nana gave a crushing defeat to Mewar forces at the battle of Harkariya Bala (1788 A.D.)

Sindhia invited

In the meantime the re-eruption of conflict between Shaktawats and Chundawats created a very ugly situation in Mewar. Rawat Bhim Singh, the leader of the Chundawats captured Chitor fort and made it his head-quarters.

The Maharana decided to take a strong action but his government being too weak,could not accomplish it. External assistance was needed and naturally the Marathas were approached On invitation from the Maharana, Mahadji agreed to extend assistance and for that purpose met him at Naharmagra on 6th September 1791 In this meeting they discussed the methods of expelling Chundawats from Chitor Consequently the Mewar and Maratha forces set out for Chitor The siege of the fort of Chitor commenced on 23rd October and lasted for nearly three weeks. Finding difficult to resist these forces for long Rawat Bhim Singh started peace negotiations with Mahadji through Ambaji. It eventually led to a settlement by which Rawat Bhim Singh vacated the fort on 17th November Before Mahadji s departure from Mewar on 6th January 1792, he made Ambaji his Viceroy for carrying on the administration of Mewar Thus the reins of administration of Mewar went now virtually in the hands of Ambaji, the Maharana was now just a **dejure** sovereign. Mewar practically became a dependency of Sindhia

Mutual rivalry of Maratha Sardars on Mewar soil

Ambaji exploited the political situation in Mewar to his own advantage to the the fullest possible extent. Meanwhile on the 12th February 1794 Mahadji breathed his last and was succeeded by his nephew Daulat Rao He appointed Ambaji the Subedar of Jhansi and eastern provinces to take up his new appintment. Ambaji left Mewar keeping Nana Ganesh as his representative to look after the affairs of the State Ganesh let loose a reign of terror and plundered and devastated the territory of Mewar in general and of the Chundawat Sardars in particular

Thus the Subedari of Mewar became a prized post and every Maratha Sardar wanted to have it for himself Mewar became a field of dispute among the Sindhia s generals Lakhwa declared himself the supreme commander in north India in the name of the widows of Mahadji who were not satisfied with Daulat Rao This situation created two Subedars in Mewar both claiming the rightful position but neither of them was powerful enough to expel the other from Mewar During the decade of the dual Viceroyalty of Ambaji and Lakhwa Mewar was the battle ground of the rival Maratha leaders which shattered its economy and destroyed its administration. Still further ruin was yet to come. The history of the following sixteen years of Mewar was a record of the tragic defeats and humiliation for the Rana The episode concerning Krishna Kumari was a clear pointer in that direction.